FRIDAY
December 1, 2023

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ಶ್ರೀ ಸಿದ್ದರಾಮಯ್ಯ
ಸನ್ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು,
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ವಿಶ್ವ ಏಡ್ಸ್ ದಿನ - 2023

WORLD AIDS DAY - 2023

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National AIDS Control Organisation
India's Voice against AIDS
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India
www.naco.gov.in

'ಸಮುದಾಯಗಳು ಮುನ್ನೆಡಸಲಿ' 25 ನೇ ವರ್ಷದ ರಜತ ಮಹೋತ್ಸವ 'Let communities lead'

ದಿನಾಂಕ: 01.12.2023, ಸ್ಥಳ : ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ವೆಟ್ ಹಾಲ್, ವಿಧಾನ ಸೌಧ. Date: 01.12.2023, Banquet Hall, Vidhana Soudha

ನಿಮ್ಮ ಹೆಚ್ಐವಿ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಕೂಡಲೇ ಹತ್ತಿರದ ಐಸಿಟಿಸಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಚಿತ ಹೆಚ್ಐವಿ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ
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ಶ್ರೀ ದಿನೇಶ್ ಗುಂಡೂರಾವ್ ರವರು
ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಂಡಿರುವುದು.

ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ. ಕೆ. ಶಿವಕುಮಾರ್
ಸನ್ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಪಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳು,
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ: ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಏಡ್ಸ್ ಪ್ರಿವೆನ್ಷನ್ ಸೊಸೈಟಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

Hit job is not our policy, says India on U.S. charges

Indian official's alleged link to plot to kill Khalistani separatists in U.S. 'a matter of concern', says government even as it continues to reject Canadian allegations on Nijjar killing

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The linking of an Indian official to the plot to kill Khalistani separatists in a U.S. case is a "matter of concern", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday, in its first such reaction to the charges filed in a New York court a day earlier.

The government said it would investigate the U.S. indictment of Indian national Nikhil Gupta, who allegedly hired a hitman to kill Sikhs for Justice founder Gurpatwant Singh Pannun earlier this year; however, this case does not change India's position on similar allegations levelled by Canada in connection with the killing of Khalistan Tiger Force chief Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June.

After Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said the U.S. indictment should make India take Canada's allegations "seriously", the MEA responded that the space given by Canada to "anti-India extremists" remains at the "heart of the issue".

"As regards the case against an individual that has been filed in a U.S. court, allegedly linking him to an Indian official, this is a matter of concern. We have said, and let me reiterate, that this is also contrary to government policy," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, at a media briefing on Thursday.

While the briefing was intended to discuss Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dubai for a UN climate summit, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and Mr. Bagchi also fielded a number of questions on the U.S. indictment, which had been made public late on Wednesday evening.

The indictment described a "senior Indian official" based in Delhi and dealing with security and Intelligence matters as the man directing the plot, who enlisted Gupta, a person involved in the illegal trade of drugs and weapons, to arrange the assassination of Pannun. The charges, which have been found worthy of prosecution by a grand jury in the U.S., did not name the Indian official, referred to as 'CC-1', but said that he had been "identified".

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RELATED REPORT
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Beyond borders

A look at India's response to the U.S. indictment charges

- High-level inquiry will take place on inputs shared by the U.S. in alleged plot to kill Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun
- Links to Indian govt. official a matter of concern
- Ordering covert assassinations not govt. policy
- Issue with Canada remains over providing space to extremists and threats to diplomats

We take such inputs seriously...necessary follow-up action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry committee
ARINDAM BAGCHI
Spokesperson
MEA

Poll predictions

Exit polls put Congress ahead in Chhattisgarh and Telangana while they differ over the winner in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Mizoram. Polling took place between November 7 and 30 and the counting of votes will be held on December 3.

K.V.S. GIRI

Election fervour: Young women line up to vote at a polling station in Hyderabad.

MADHYA PRADESH
(Seats: **230, Target**: 116)

Source	BJP	CONG.
ABP News-C Voter	88-112	113-137
India Today- Axis My India	140-162	68-90
News 24-Today's Chanakya	151 ± 12	74 ± 12
India TV- CNX	140-159	70-89

CHHATTISGARH
(Seats: **90, Target 46**)

Source	BJP	CONG.
ABP News-C Voter	36-48	41-53
India Today- Axis My India	36-46	40-50
News 24-Today's Chanakya	33 ± 8	57 ± 8
India TV- CNX	30-40	46-56

RAJASTHAN
(Seats: **199, Target**: 100)

Source	BJP	CONG.+
ABP News-C Voter	94-114	71-91
India Today- Axis My India	80-100	86-106
News 24-Today's Chanakya	89 ± 12	101 ± 12
India TV- CNX	80-90	94-104

TELANGANA
(Seats: **119, Target**: 60)

Source	BRS	CONG.+
News 24-Today's Chanakya	33 ± 9	71 ± 9
India TV- CNX	31-47	63-79
ABP News-C Voter	38-54	49-65

MIZORAM
(Seats: **40, Target**: 21)

Source	MNF	ZPM
ABP News-C Voter	15-21	12-18
India TV- CNX	14-18	12-16
India Today- Axis My India	3-7	28-35

■ The BJP is currently in power in Madhya Pradesh, Congress is ruling in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. In Telangana, K. Chandrashekhar Rao has been in power for a decade while MNF is in government in Mizoram

REPORT ON PAGE 15

Telangana sees 63.9% voter turnout

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana witnessed a relatively peaceful polling on Thursday marked by low voter turnout compared with the previous elections.

The voter turnout stood at 63.94%, show the latest reports. Hyderabad saw a dismal 40% as against 50% in 2018.

Polling was held for 119 seats with Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao seeking a third term.

Tension prevailed in several places across North Telangana where the BRS and Congress levelled accusations of money distribution or illegal entry into the polling booths.

FULL REPORT
» PAGE 11

NEARBY

New master plan for airport

BENGALURU
BIAL, operator of Kempegowda International Airport, is drawing up a new master plan to prepare for its next phase of development. » PAGE 3

State's HIV prevalence rate higher than national average

BENGALURU
At 0.29%, Karnataka's HIV prevalence rate is higher than the national average of 0.22%. » PAGE 8

METROPLUS » PAGE 7

Writers, activists up in arms against police requirement for event details

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after the Bengaluru police denied permission for a solidarity event for Palestine at Ranga Shankara, city-based social activists, writers, actors, and others are up in arms, terming the Siddaramaiah-led government a "police government".

Tagging a copy of the High Grounds police notice issued in September this year to spaces such as Gandhi Bhavan, Ambedkar Bhavan, and Sardar Patel Bhavan, the activists launched an online campaign against the government for "containing the voices of solidarity".

The police notice has asked the organisers to provide details of the programme and the guests prior to giving the premises on rent. This, according to the notice, will help the police to make the required arrangements to maintain law and order. The notice also stated that the area has houses of many VIPs, and hence, the police have to take precautionary measures.

The notice also warned the management of legal action in case of any law and order issue if they failed to inform the police about the programme.

The High Grounds police, when contacted, said the notice was served to take precautionary measures to maintain law and order. "Earlier, there were instances of fights, law and order issues, and inflammatory speeches delivered to disturb peace in the society," a police officer said.

"We are following the order which directed us to prepare a report on the programmes conducted in public places and submit a report. There were also instructions for us to take adequate security measures to ensure law and order," the officer added.

Activists said they are organising a protest to express their "opinion and solidarity for the oppressed people of Palestine." "The idea of the protest is to campaign for peace and demand Israel to stop genocide," a city-based activist said.

"We will inform the authorities about the meet to be held at Freedom Park on December 2, where several will gather to express their solidarity for Palestine. We will follow the guidelines and submit the details of the event, and there is no question of backing out," the activist added.

GDP surges 7.6% in Q2, goes past RBI forecast

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

Despite a tangible growth downturn in the farm and services sectors as well as consumer spending, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at a higher-than-expected 7.6% in the July-September 2023 quarter, as per initial estimates from the National Statistical Office.

The second quarter (Q2) growth was slightly lower than the 7.8% rise in the previous quarter, but well over the central bank's projected uptick of 6.5%. Growth in the Gross Value Added (GVA) in the economy eased slight to 7.4% in the second quarter of 2023-24, from 7.6% in Q1. But the GVA growth in the farm sector skidded sharply to just 1.2% from 3.5% in Q1 while it more than halved for services sectors such as trade, hotels and transport from 9.2% in Q1 to 4.3%.

Construction push

The first half of 2023-24 has provisionally recorded a 7.7% growth in GDP, with the Growth in the Gross Value Added rising 7.6%, led by a 10.5% growth in construction and 9.3% uptick in manufacturing.

CONTINUED ON
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Illegal abortions: CID probe ordered

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The government has ordered a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) probe into illegal abortions in private hospitals/clinics in the State.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah spoke to Home Minister G. Parameshwara and advised that such a probe be ordered. Earlier in the day, Mandya district in-charge Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy said he would discuss with the Chief Minister the feasibility of transferring the female foeticide case to CID.

A few days ago, the Bengaluru police arrested a doctor and his lab technician who allegedly performed around 900 illegal abortions in the last three years. Dr. Chandan Ballal and Nisar allegedly charged around ₹30,000 for each abortion which they carried out at a hospital in Mysuru.

On Wednesday, Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said the Health Commissioner had been asked to seek reports from the district health officers of Mandya and Mysuru and take action with regard to the illegal abortions in both the districts.

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M BG-BGE

The PKL is back, and here's your season guide: part two

With massive rejigs in squads and scope for new fan loyalties, the Pro Kabaddi League is back with three months of high-octane action. In the second of a two-part season preview, here's everything you need to know about the tournament and the teams in the mix

The teams: *Clockwise:* Bengal Warriors, Bengaluru Bulls, Gujarat Giants, Haryana Steelers, Puneri Paltan, and U Mumba.SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Lavanya Lakshmi Narayanan

The auction ahead of season 10 of the Pro Kabaddi League tossed up team combinations drastically for some sides while allowing price corrections and core retention for others. As a brand new season comes calling, we take a look at whether these new-look teams can give the settled outfits a run for their money; whether old hegemonies will be revived or new legacies await their crowning moment.

BENGAL WARRIORS
Winner (S7)

An outfit with a stable think tank, Warriors, who won the seventh edition of the league, will head into the 10th edition with the services of skipper Maninder Singh. After releasing him, the side was determined to get him back in the auction exercise and have built their squad around 'Mighty Mani'.
Strength: Raiding - Maninder returning to the Bengal fold is a big win. He is a raider who can win matches single-handedly and is the second-most successful raider of all time in PKL history with 1231 raid points. Maninder often lacks support in raiding but Shrikant Jadhav and new Taiwanese prospect Chai-Ming Chang could be options to explore for the side.
Weakness: Defense. Ever since Iranian Mohammad Nabibakhsh's departure, Maninder has not found ample all-round assistance in raiding and revival. That gap continues in season 10. Injuries have weakened the left defence of the Warriors and without established names, this could be a point to exploit for rivals during the season. A lot will depend on the seasoned Shubham Shinde and young Vaibhav Garje.

BENGALURU BULLS
Winner (S6)

The only team to persist with the same coach(Randhir Sehrawat) in all seasons so far, Bulls believe in stability. Randhir is grooming young Bharat Hooda to be for this team what Pawan Sehrawat was during his stint with the franchise (he led the side to the title). Vikash Kandola's release ahead of the auction and then subsequent retention using Final Bid Match (FBM) isn't the best picture of confidence for the raider but he has the settled unit of Bharat and Neeraj Narwal to sink into in this lineup.The bigger resource in raid might be Abhishek Singh, who previously played for U Mumba and Telugu Titans. Injuries hampered him multiple times and Bulls will hope he stays fit for the tenth chapter of the league.
Strength: Defensive solidity – With the likes of Surjeet SIngh, Saurabh Nandal, Aman and others, Randhir has ensured he has safety nets for almost every position. His faith in an aging allrounder like Ran Singh also underlines the very same. The team has tried to double up all corners and are easily one of the most balanced sides of the season.
Weakness: Picking fame over form – While Ran Singh, Surjeet, and Vikash are not easy customers, their recent run in the league doesn't inspire confidence. The Bulls also have a Polish raider, Piotr Pamulak but have historically been stingy about how they use their fringe foreign recruits. How Randhir rotates his squad will be key to this side's success.

GUJARAT GIANTS
Coach Ram Mehar Singh is a taskmaster. He is clear about how he wants his team to line up and the formations he hopes to see on the mat. He's a little too much of a perfectionist sometimes. This explains why he has gone for someone as seasoned as Iranian warhorse Fazel Atrachali to captain the side. Fazel comes with Nabibakhsh, with the duo operating better as a corner-cover pair. To balance that experience, the side has retained its young core. Players like Rakesh, Parteek Dahiya and Arkham Shaikh (who like Maninder, was retained using the Final Bid Match option).
Strength: Defence. This might be among the most formidable backlines in the league with the Iranian firepower balancing itself with experienced Indian campaigners like Sombir. Ram Mehar is a good mentor and Arkham Shaikh and Parteek Dahiya may find other facets to their operations on the mat in the company of other league legends.
Weakness: Gujarat doesn't have starpower in the raiding department but it isn't something coach Ram Mehar is sweating about. He has time to cast Rakesh and Parteek into the mould the league demands, but so much depending on such young shoulders might be a tricky proposition for the Giants.

HARYANA STEELERS
The Steelers have rotated coaches and squads in trying to find a successful combination of players and tactics but have fallen short. The side finished in the bottom half of the table and the consistent underperformance won't sit well with a feisty coach like Manpreet Singh. The young gaffer has in his arsenal the explosive capabilities of Siddharth Desai who looks leaner and meaner heading into the season. After injuries hampered much of his season over the past two years, Desai has a point to prove with a franchise that has some naysayers to quieten.
Strength: Backup. Desai has raiders to fall back on should the going get tough with the likes of Chandran Ranjith, K Prapanjan and Vinay at his disposal. If Desai has revival assistance, he can be unstoppable and is handy in defence too.
Weakness: Much faith was placed in the Jaideep-Mohit cover combo last season and while the duo found rhythm eventually, the warm-up phase cost the side. That explains why the Steelers have fortified their defensive arsenal with a crop of young players. The outfit needs to help Desai stay on the mat and will hope to rally around the star raider in season 10.

PUNERI PALTAN
All the hard work done by this franchise over the years, particularly with its academy setup alongside roping in the experience of Fazel and Nabi seemed like the perfect winning formula for the Paltan. However, the side finished as runner-up in a heartbreaking loss to Jaipur Pink Panthers last season - a game that saw the occasion get to the young players in crunch phases. This time, the Paltan have swapped out two mighty Iranians for one - Mohammadreza Shadloui Chiyaneh, an imperious all-rounder who can turn games around their head.
Strength: The Pune brand of young raiding blood consisting of homegrown youth setup talent has been one of the franchise's biggest strengths. Adding Chiyaneh to that mix seems to be a masterstroke in terms of elevating the side's performance to another level.
Weakness: Who will calm these feisty youngsters down? Captain Aslam Inamdar, star player Chiyaneh and a bunch of others in this side can take hasty calls when they have their backs to a wall. The potential consequences of the absence of a senior (what Fazel was to this side last season) might be something coach BC Ramesh will want to iron out before the season gets underway.

U MUMBA
Winner (S2)

Looking to regain the championship title, U Mumba has brought back some of its proven stalwarts. Jeeva Kumar, who won the league with the franchise is back in the coaching setup. Gholamreza Mazandarani, who has coached Mumba before and was at the helm for Telugu Titans' purple patch in PKL history, is also back as head coach. What sets this side apart, however, is its investment in a group of Iranian youngsters who impressed against India on the international stage this year - Amirmohammad Zafardanesh and Alireza Mirzaeian. The raiding duo will benefit from being under their national head coach and the likes of compatriot Heidarali Ekrami.
Strength: Mix of youth and experience. Retention of their proven core of Surinder Singh (captain), young allrounder Jai Bhagwan, Ekrami and Rinku Sharma (remember his superhuman solo super tackles) is a strength for this side. Girish Maruti Ernak adds a lethal defensive element to the mix and will hope to find more consistency this season.
Weakness: Sides with such a mix of age groups and skill sets are heavily dependent on momentum. U Mumba knows this first-hand with their campaigns picking up steam when top players click. In a season where combinations have all been shuffled, a relatively stable set up should get going early on and this is what coach Gholamreza will hope to do when the league gets underway.

THE GIST

What is final bid match: The Final Bid Match rule allows teams that have released their players from the previous season to buy them back during the auction at the price of the final bid from a rival team

Big bucks: Mohammadreza Shadloui Chiyaneh (₹2.35 cr) is the most expensive foreign player in PKL history, overtaking compatriot Fazel Atrachali (₹1.6cr)

Honour roll: Patna Pirates (with three titles) is the most successful side in PKL history followed by Jaipur Pink Panthers (two titles). U Mumba, Bengal Warriors, Dabang Delhi and Bengaluru Bulls all have one title each.

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INBRIEF

Three people arrested in two cases, drugs seized

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) officials on Wednesday arrested three alleged peddlers in the city, including a foreign national, in two cases and seized drugs. The CCB officials, based on specific inputs, arrested two persons, who are from Odisha, and recovered 15 kg of marijuana from them. The accused used to work as pushcart vendors selling plastic wares in Hennur and Marathahalli to hoodwink the police and sell drugs to their clients. The accused used to source the drugs from their home town and bring them to the city by train. They had been operating in the city for the last one month, the police said.

In another case, the police arrested a foreign national and recovered 180 grams of MDMA and 50 grams of 150 ecstasy pills from him. The accused had come to the city on a business visa in 2005 and continued to stay even after his travel papers expired. The total value of the seized drugs is estimated to be around ₹50 lakh, the police said.

KRRS opposes construction of cricket stadium in Mysuru

The proposed construction of an international-level cricket stadium on the outskirts of Mysuru has been opposed by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS). The land acquisition process for the proposed stadium, to come up in Yelwal hobli, has been initiated and 26.31 acres was required for the purpose.

Badagalpura Nagendra of the KRRS said farmers were opposed to the proposed stadium as the area was suitable for agriculture.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (December 01, Friday), the following explainers are available:

- Understanding simultaneous elections **bit.ly/oneelectionnat**
- The spread of AIDS can be stopped with science-backed protocols **bit.ly/aidsandscience**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access this article. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

'City should embrace Singapore model to manage traffic snarls'

If the city adopts some tough measures, automatically the number of cars in the city will come down and more people will be forced to use public mobility, says Anjum Parvez, BMRCL MD

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

Anjum Parvez, managing director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., at the Bengaluru Tech Summit on Thursday, and (right) visitors at the event. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND SUDHAKARA JAIN

It is time Bengaluru introduced the Singapore model to manage traffic snarls and decrease vehicular choke in its central business district areas, suggested Anjum Parvez, managing director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL).

"When you are met with certain tough situations and when nothing else is working, we may have to take practical steps. We need not wait until we fall apart at the seams. It is always good to act before we reach there," he told *The Hindu*.

He said he was not suggesting that Bengaluru should embrace the Singapore model as a BMRCL official, but only as a common citizen. "I believe if the city adopts some tough measures, automatically the number of cars in the city will come down, more people will be forced to use public mobility, and consequently the city will get a breather," he added.

However, he added, no restrictive measures would offer sudden relief, it would take at least some 10 to 12 years to stabilise and yield some results.

At present, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) holds a monopoly on plying buses and ferrying people. Many tech firms are ready to buy buses and operate services between their offices/campuses to the nearest metro stations. However, the existing Motor Vehicle Act does not permit such arrangement and therefore it requires amendments, Mr. Parvez said.

Common mobility cards

Soon, passengers depended on different public mobility options such as metro train, public buses, Uber or Ola cabs, and autos can travel across the country using a single card, a common mobility card, Mr. Parvez said.

According to him, the National Common Mobility Card, an inter-operable transport card, conceived by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, demanded multiple money transactions to make it valid and usable, and this issue has been fixed. Also, passengers faced problems while buying cards online and those glitches were removed.

The BMRCL's mandate was to make available a metro station within the maximum 2-km radius of every Bangalorean. "The first-mile and the last-mile mobility are the biggest bottlenecks that exist today. All stakeholders should work in tandem to make this happen," he said while speaking at a session on 'Future mobility' at the Bengaluru Tech Summit-2023 on Thursday.

He said the BMRCL was committed to ensuring eco-friendly activities and to encourage eco-friendly traffic systems, metro stations were facilitated with two-wheeler and three-wheeler electric vehicle charging units.

Speaking on the occasion, Uber India director Sanjay Chadha said the passengers should shift from cabs to public transport like buses to ensure a free flow of traffic and to reduce traffic congestion. Uber has introduced electric bus service in Mumbai and Delhi in this regard, he said and added that similar services would be introduced in Bengaluru as well. Beta Technologies director Blake Opsahi said India had great opportunities for electric aircraft. With around 200 airports, India had excellent aviation infrastructure and the number of private planes and air taxis would increase in the future, he added.

35 products launched at tech summit

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Various start-ups launched 35 ground-breaking products and solutions at the Bengaluru Tech Summit, Karnataka's annual tech exposition, on Thursday.

These new products and solutions were targeted at sectors such as IT/ITeS, Agri-Tech, Med-Tech, Healthcare, Clean-Tech, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Deep Tech, Blockchain, IoT, Cybersecurity, Environment Tech, AVGC and ESDM, said a statement from IT ministry.

According to IT Minister Priyank Kharge, the array of innovative solutions included electronic devices integrating Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things, advancements in automotive manufacturing, innovations in footwear and accessories, technologies in avionics & defence, effluent air treatment solutions, apps to prevent fraudulent transactions, fabric authentication tools, animations & comics, and deep tech-based platforms for quality assessment.

BBPS-Biller Solution

The tech summit also witnessed the launch of BBPS-Biller Solution, which facilitates and simplifies interoperable bill payment collection for Indian businesses.

It is a single integration platform designed by Cashfree Payments for businesses handling repeat payments, enabling them to get discovered on 150 digital channels and 35 lakhs offline collection centres on the Bharat Bill Payment System and collect bill payments at scale, claimed the company.

Chhattisgarh student tops Rural IT Quiz

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Udit Pratap Singh of BSP Senior Secondary School, Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, won the Rural IT Quiz organised by the Government of Karnataka in association with Tata Consultancy Services at Bengaluru Tech Summit on Thursday.

IT Minister Priyank Kharge said the idea of the quiz was to inspire young people from rural backgrounds to learn more by nurturing their curiosity. Along with making them aim for good grades in school, it's important to keep their spirit of inquiry and curiosity alive.

Vignesh Nauso Shetye of Dr. K.B. Hedgewar Vidyamandir, from Bicholim, Goa, was the runner-up. The national winner and runner-up will receive ₹1 lakh and ₹50,000 respectively, while all the remaining finalists will receive a TCS education scholarship of ₹10,000.

People warned against Mirji's fake FB account

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The cybercrime police have warned members of the public against a fake Facebook account in the name of the former city Police Commissioner Jyothi Prakash Mirji, through which a person is seeking money from people citing an emergency.

Based on a complaint by Jabir Khan, a resident of Thanisandra and one of the victims, the police registered a case of identity theft and impersonation under the IT Act on Thursday. The accused had used the photograph of Mr. Mirji to make it appear like the social media account is genuine.

Police chief makes body camera compulsory for personnel

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Alok Mohan, Director-General and Inspector-General of Police

To bring in more transparency and accountability, the Karnataka police chief has directed all personnel to wear body cameras compulsorily during work. This move is to contain the growing number of illegal activities and charges of corrupt practices against the police.

Director-General and Inspector-General of Police Alok Mohan, in a recent circular to all unit heads across Karnataka, made it mandatory for police officials to wear body worn cameras (BWCs), especially when they proceed to make an arrest. Stressing on the need for the BWCs, Mr. Mohan said that the cameras would improve the quality of evidence, reduce complaints against the police and improve transparency in work.

For effective use of the BWCs, The police must use them in handling law and order situations, investigation of crime, and traffic management.

The circular contains standard operating procedures, according to which the BWC should be worn on the left side of the shoulder so that recording of the entire event is captured properly, and that the officer should inform the person that he or she is being recorded.

Unit officials should take utmost precautions to maintain safety and custody of the cameras, and keep them in ready-to-use condition. Unit officers should maintain the data of the recording for a minimum of 30 days, which can be used as evidence in case of any eventuality, the circular added.

The BWCs were initially introduced for the Bengaluru traffic police to counter allegations by motorists of corruption and high-handedness. Later, the cameras were introduced for night beat policemen in the South East division before being extended across the city following incidents of beat police indulging in illegal activities.

Five-month-old infant undergoes life-saving bone marrow transplantation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A five-month-old female infant, weighing less than 5 kg, who was diagnosed with a rare congenital immune disorder – Leukocyte Adhesion Deficiency (LAD) – got a new lease of life through a complex bone marrow transplantation (BMT) procedure at a private hospital in Bengaluru.

The infant's early days were marred by recurrent severe infections reminiscent of the tragic loss of her elder brother to a similar infection during infancy. Her parents, Bandesha and Balamma, daily wage workers from Raichur district, noticed that her condition started deteriorating when she was two months old.

Malnourishment and low immunity made matters worse. A comprehensive immunological and genetic testing at Aster CMI Hospital in Bengaluru confirmed LAD, a rare condition with an incidence of one per million live births.

LAD is a rare genetic disease that causes severe immunodeficiency, which prevents the body's immune system from normal functioning. The only curative treatment for LAD is bone marrow transplantation from a healthy donor, doctors said.

Fortunately, the mother emerged as a beacon of hope as she was human leukocyte antigen (HLA) compatible with the infant.

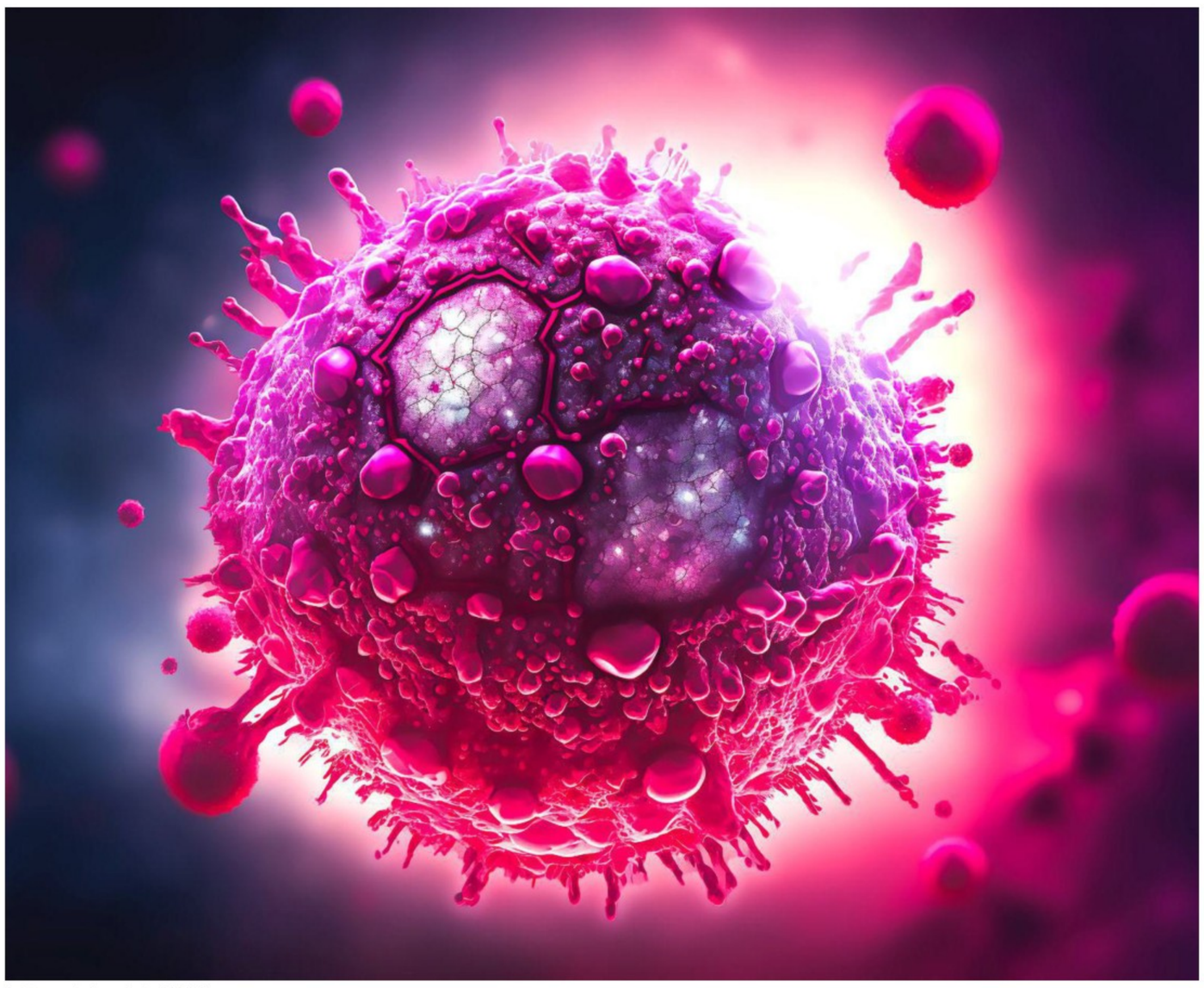
Although the treatment cost went up to ₹15 lakh, the family paid only ₹50,000. Upon understanding the family's difficulty in arranging funds for the treatment, the hospital extended support through the Aster Sick Kids Foundation as well as CSR funds. The infant was admitted for the procedure on September 26 and was discharged on November 8.

Addressing pressperson here on Thursday, Anoop P., senior consultant, Haematology, Paediatric Haemato-Oncology and BMT, at the hospital, said, "Due to the complications involved, most hospitals, even in affluent countries, may prefer to perform BMT after the baby weighs at least 10 kg and is completely free of active infection. In this case, it was clearly not an option, as she would have succumbed to the disease. Our team chose to proceed with transplantation regardless of the baby's age or weight as it was the only hope for her survival."

The spread of AIDS can be stopped with science-backed protocols

Effective antiretroviral medications are now available to keep the viral load low, and prevent multiplication of HIV. People with HIV on these drugs can lead a normal life without developing opportunistic infections. Trials recommend starting antiretroviral therapy soon after diagnosis of HIV

N. Kumarasamy



A 3D rendering of the HIV virus. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Since the first diagnosed case of HIV in 1981, it is estimated that globally 39 million persons are now living with HIV. In India the figure is 2.4 million. What is being done to stop the spread of this virus? There were 1.3 million new HIV infections in 2022 globally and 63,000 in India. Most transmissions occur in the key population include female sex workers, men having sex with men, transgender community and injecting drug users. Prevention interventions using behavioural change never stopped HIV spread significantly. There are no vaccines for HIV despite extensive research. Involving the communities and making them the focus will prevent infections.

Persons who acquire HIV end up with compromised immune systems which lead to opportunistic infections like tuberculosis, fungal meningitis, pneumonia, diarrheal diseases, variety of skin lesions and certain cancers. These co-morbid conditions result in advanced HIV disease and progression to death. In 2022, 650,000 persons died due to these conditions globally. In India AIDS caused 42,000 deaths. Many of these opportunistic infections are preventable and treatable.

The World Health Organization has developed guidelines for Advanced HIV to prevent and diagnose these opportunistic infections. These guidelines are still not widely implemented across the world. Health care programs should implement these in-expensive guidelines and tools to prevent advanced HIV. Tuberculosis was a leading killer among those with HIV in 2022. Newer short course TB preventive treatments with Isoniazid and Rifapentine have proven effective in clinical trials. Still TB programs in many countries are struggling to implement these treatments.

Today we have effective antiretroviral medications available to prevent multiplication of HIV. People with HIV who are on these antiretroviral medications can lead a normal, healthy lifestyle without developing opportunistic infections. Results from clinical trials recommend starting Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) soon after diagnosis. The Voluntary Health Services Infectious Diseases Medical Centre in Chennai participated in the landmark global START clinical trial and based on the results, WHO Guidelines recommend rapid ART initiation for maximum benefit. Several lower and middle income countries haven't implemented this guidance effectively. Analysis shows initiating early Antiretroviral therapy soon after diagnosis is cost effective and cost saving. Health care program managers need appropriate training on such scientific evidence to facilitate the implementation at an appropriate time without delay.

Almost 21 million lives have been saved with antiretroviral therapy globally. India's ability to produce generic HIV medicines and supply them worldwide led to major successes in the global AIDS fight. Over 90% of antiretrovirals consumed globally were from India. We have the time-tested and proven capacity to manufacture HIV diagnostics, medicines and robust supply chain mechanisms to deliver them worldwide sustainably. But are HIV programmes worldwide strong enough to ensure that HIV prevention, diagnostics, treatment, care and support services are reaching every person in need - without any further delay?

Persons with HIV who are on uninterrupted antiretroviral therapy lead a normal life and modelling studies have shown, their life expectancy is almost similar to persons who don't have HIV. Several new antiretrovirals are in advanced clinical research, but we don't have a cure yet. Long acting antiretrovirals have been recently approved for treatment and this is a boon for individuals who have issues with oral medication adherence. With all these newer antiretroviral therapies, HIV disease is yet another chronic manageable condition. New complications in people with HIV are non communicable diseases (NCDs) like diabetes, hypertension, stroke and kidney disease. NCD care will be key for persons with HIV for longevity.

Guidelines in the developed world recommend that everyone living with HIV aged 40 and over should take a statin to reduce their risk of heart disease, even if they do not have raised cholesterol or a high risk of heart disease. The new guidance is based on the results of the REPRIVE study conducted globally to test whether statin reduced cardiovascular risk in people with HIV. It was presented at the International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science in July 2023. As study investigator, I was able to demonstrate results that showed taking pitavastatin daily reduced the risk of a major cardiovascular event such as heart attack, stroke or a clinical intervention to treat a serious heart disorder by 35% in people with HIV.

> Almost 21 million lives have been saved with antiretroviral therapy. India's ability to produce generic medicines and supply them worldwide led to major successes in the AIDS fight

We have robust Antiretroviral Therapy (ART), that can result in undetectable viral load for those PLHIV on treatment within just a couple of months and by now it is amply clear that 'Undetectable is Untransmittable' or U=U based on other research led by my team. Thus, each new HIV case is a 'missed opportunity' where a range of combination prevention options could have helped prevent the person from getting infected. Likewise, every AIDS- related death is a grim reminder that it could have been averted because we have proven science-backed tools to make 'AIDS death' history.

We have effective biomedical prevention tools in preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medications. These oral medications are very effective in preventing HIV acquisition if a person with high risk of HIV takes them correctly without fail. Adherence is very important which might be an issue, as these medication have to be taken every day. To deal with this, a long acting injectable PrEP medication called Cabotegravir has been developed. Cabotrgravir injections can be taken every 2 months instead of the daily oral pill and studies have shown higher efficacy in HIV prevention with long acting injectable PrEP. Many African countries have initiated implementation of this innovative prevention tool.

The Indian National HIV program should hurry to implement such interventions to stop AIDS in India.

Two decades ago, the global AIDS pandemic seemed unstoppable. More than 2.5 million people were acquiring HIV each year, and AIDS was claiming two million lives a year. The estimated 1.3 million new HIV infections in 2022 were the fewest in decades, with the declines especially strong in regions with the highest HIV burdens .

These effects were due to the combination of effective antiretroviral therapy which resulted in community viral suppression and the introduction of PrEP to prevent HIV acquisition. Despite advocacy programs, the national program in India has not yet introduced PrEP in India. These delays in implementation will lead to an unstoppable spread of HIV.

By 2025, 95% of all people living with HIV (PLHIV) should have a diagnosis, 95% of those should be taking lifesaving antiretroviral treatment (ART) and 95% of PLHIV on treatment should achieve a suppressed viral load to improve health and reduce onward HIV transmission. In 2022, these percentages were 86%, 89% and 93% respectively.

Today we have science-backed robust tools to prevent HIV, diagnose HIV, treat, care and support PLHIV. Let us use these tools to end AIDS.

(Dr. N. Kumaraswamy is chief and director, VHS Infectious Diseases Medical Centre, Voluntary Health Services, Chennai. Kumarasamy@cartcrs.org)

Burning of fossil fuels cause millions of deaths every year. Image for representational purpose only. GETTY IMAGES

Air pollution causes over 2 million deaths annually in India: study

Press Trust of India

Outdoor air pollution from all sources accounts for 2.18 million deaths per year in India, second only to China, according to a modelling study published in *The BMJ*. The research found that air pollution from using fossil fuels in industry, power generation, and transportation accounts for 5.1 million extra deaths a year worldwide. This equates to 61 per cent of a total estimated 8.3 million deaths worldwide due to ambient (outdoor) air pollution from all sources in 2019, which could be avoided by replacing fossil fuels with clean, renewable energy. These new estimates of fossil fuel-related deaths are larger than most previously reported values suggesting that phasing out fossil fuels might have a greater impact on attributable mortality than previously thought.

The team, including researchers from Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, Germany, used a new model to estimate all cause and cause-specific deaths due to fossil fuel-related air pollution and to assess potential health benefits from policies that replace fossil fuels with clean sources.

They assessed excess deaths -- the number of deaths above that expected during a given time period -- using data from the Global Burden of Disease 2019 study, NASA satellite-based fine particulate matter and population data, and atmospheric chemistry, aerosol, and

Phasing out fossil fuels would result in the largest absolute reductions in attributable deaths in South, South East and East Asia, amounting to about 3.85 million annually

relative risk modelling for 2019, in four scenarios.

The first scenario assumes that all fossil fuel-related emission sources are phased out. The second and third scenarios assume that 25 per cent and 50 per cent of exposure reductions towards the fossil phase-out are realised. The fourth scenario removes all human-induced (anthropogenic) sources of air pollution, leaving only natural sources such as desert dust and natural wildfires. The results show that in 2019, 8.3 million deaths worldwide were attributable to fine particles (PM2.5) and ozone (O3) in ambient air, of which 61 per cent (5.1 million) were linked to fossil fuels.

This corresponds to 82 per cent of the maximum number of air pollution deaths that could be averted by controlling all anthropogenic emissions, according to the researchers. Attributable deaths to all sources of ambient air pollution were highest across South and East Asia, particularly in China with 2.44 million per year, followed by India with 2.18 million per year, they said.

The researchers found that most (52 per cent) of deaths were related to common conditions such as ischemic heart disease (30 per cent), stroke (16 per cent), chronic obstructive lung disease (16 per cent) and diabetes (6 per cent). About 20 per cent were undefined but are likely to be partly linked to high blood pressure and neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, they said.Phasing out fossil fuels would result in the largest absolute reductions in attributable deaths in South, South East and East Asia, amounting to about 3.85 million annually, the researchers said. This is equivalent to 80-85 per cent of potentially preventable deaths from all anthropogenic sources of ambient air pollution in these regions, they said.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Wellness in a digital age

Anjali Srivastava

QUESTION 1
Which type of light exposure from screens can affect skin health by potentially causing premature skin aging or pigmentation, while also influencing the circadian rhythm?

QUESTION 2
What is the recommended duration for taking regular breaks from screen use to prevent digital eye strain?

QUESTION 3
_____ term describes the fear of being without a mobile phone or being unable to use it. This psychological condition is characterised by distress when separated from one's mobile device, often linked to feelings of isolation or disconnection from the digital world.

QUESTION 4
Extended periods of device usage often result in a posture-related issue causing strain on the neck and shoulders. What is the term for this common condition, stemming from excessive screen time and forward-leaning positions, which can lead to discomfort and tension?

QUESTION 5
The light emitted by screens impacts the production of a crucial sleep hormone responsible for regulating the sleep-wake cycle. Name the hormone.

Visual question: Identify the peculiar condition indicated by the red arrow, associated with extended smartphone usage, where the little finger experiences discomfort or bends due to the device's weight or grip. Check yours too and see if you notice any changes or discomfort!

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

BIAL to prepare new master plan for KIA

It is to prepare for the airport's next phase of development; plan will be ready in 12 to 14 months, says company COO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore International Airport Ltd. (BIAL), the operator of the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), is drawing up a new master plan to prepare for the airport's next phase of development.

Satyaki Raghunath, chief operating officer (COO) of the BIAL, told reporters on Thursday that the work on the master plan was about to start and that it would be ready in 12 to 14 months.

"We do a master plan update every four or five years as in the case of any airport around the world to make sure that we have got all of our facilities in order and to plan the next phase of development. We did the last one in 2018-19. We are going to do another one now," Mr. Raghunath said.

A file photo of the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.

Terminal-3 location

He added that the new master plan update would also think about where Terminal-3 (T-3), which was expected to come up by early 2030, would be located.

Mr. Raghunath said there was also a plan to connect Terminal-1 (T1), Terminal-2 (T-2), and the upcoming T-3 using an automated people mover (APM) system.

"In the longer term as we do the master plan, we also plan to have an APM system which is like a train which connects T-1, T-2, and also T-3 whenever it comes up. An APM system like the one in Changi and Dubai airports," Mr. Raghunath said. He added that currently there was no such ride system in any of the airports in India and that BIAL would not execute this system till the KIA crosses 50 million passengers per annum (MPPA).

"We will start planning for this in this master plan but we won't execute it till we cross 50 million passengers because it does not make sense for us to put that much of investment. We need to have that number of passengers to have such a ride system," Mr. Raghunath added.

On second airport

On Infrastructure Development Minister M.B. Patil's recent statement that the government was considering establishing a second airport on the Tumakuru-Chitradurga highway, he said that BIAL had no objection to this proposal.

"We (the KIA) will get to the 80-90 million traffic mark by the late 2020s or early 2030s. We welcome it (the second airport proposal) because we will run out of capacity by the early 2030s as we only have two runways. If the aviation market in Bengaluru has to grow beyond two runways, then you have to find another space whether it is in Tumakuru or Mysuru Road or Hosur," Mr. Raghunath said.

He added that the BIAL would also bid for operating a second airport if the government decides to develop it. The BIAL is expecting the KIA's passenger traffic by the end of this financial year to be somewhere between 36 to 38 billion MPPA.

Award for Pandit Venkatesh Kumar

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

The Kadri Gopalnath Academy for Arts, Mangaluru, has chosen Hindustani singer Pandit Venkatesh Kumar for its Kadri Gopalnath Lifetime Achievement Award for 2023. The award carries ₹50,000 in cash and a silver plaque. It will be presented at a function to be held in Mangaluru on December 23.

Timings
BENGALURU

FRIDAY, DEC. 01	
RISE 06:26	SET 17:51
RISE 21:28	SET 09:54
SATURDAY, DEC. 02	
RISE 06:26	SET 17:52
RISE 22:20	SET 10:40
SUNDAY, DEC. 03	
RISE 06:27	SET 17:52
RISE 23:10	SET 11:23

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	31	24
Mysuru	31	23
Bengaluru	28	20

Bengaluru Today
28°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be slight warm and humid. Spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower will occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
28°C Mostly dry weather to prevail.The weather will be comfortable but humid. Morning will be pleasant. Night also will be pleasant.

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Lecture on skill development held

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering of Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology, Bengaluru, in association with the Indian Council of Social Service Research and IQAC, on Tuesday conducted an Amritkaal series lecture on 'Skill development as a focus of 21st century learning'.

Chief guest G. Gopakumar, former Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Kerala, while delivering the lecture, said, "India is truly living in Amritkaal as most of the young generation of today would see the 100th year of Independence in 2047. If today's generation acquires the required skills, it would definitely see the most prosperous India as a world superpower."

Later, there was an interactive session on development of skills, a release said.

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Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka
Campaign drive program
by Hon'ble Minister for Transport & Muzrai
Shri Ramalinga Reddy...
to create awareness among the
public about the dangers caused
by over-speeding vehicle's
Dated : 01-12-2023, Time : 12.00 pm
Venue : K.S.R.T.C, Head Office, Shanti Nagar, Bangalore.
An average of 109 accidents and 32 fatalities are occurring in Karnataka every day. That means about 4 to 5 accidents and one death every hour.
#(2022, https:/ksp.karnataka.gov.in/storage/pdf-filed,road Accident_Report_2022.pdf)
'YOUR SPEEDING CAN COST A FAMILY ITS FUTURE FOREVER'
The photo shows the family of a Road Crash victam K.N. Purushottama of Tumakuru. He was hit by a speeding driver in Bengaluru. While he was on his way to a Job interview on a Motor cycle, the crash ruined his family.
Sri Ramalinga Reddy,
Hon'ble Minister for
Transport & Muzrai
receives grievances from
the public.
DRIVE SLOWLY
Follow Speed Limit While Driving
Strive for Road Accident Free State
As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.
Dr. N.V. Prasad I.A.S., Secretary Trasnport Department
A.M. Yogeesh I.A.S., Commissioner for Trasnport & Road Safety
J. Purushotham, Additional Commissioner & Member Secretary Karnataka State Road Safety Authority

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of Tejas jets approved by India for procurement

97 The Defence Acquisition Council headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved of procuring an additional batch of Tejas light combat aircraft and around 150 Prachand helicopters to boost the combat capability of the armed forces. PTI

Deaths caused by air pollution in India annually

2.18 in million. A modelling study by the medical journal *The BMJ* found that air pollution from using fossil fuels in industry, power generation, and transportation accounts for 5.1 million extra deaths a year worldwide. PTI

Saudi extends term of deposit to Pakistan's central bank

3 in $ billion. The State Bank of Pakistan said that the decision by the Saudi Fund for Development was taken just before the maturing date of the deposit that was due on December 5. The decision has come as a relief to Pakistan's struggling economy. PTI

Ford's loss in profits due to the six-week workers strike

1.7 in $ billion. A six-week United Auto Workers (UAW) strike at Ford cut sales by about 1,00,000 vehicles. The strike caused it to lose production of high-profit trucks/SUVs. UAW shut down the company's largest factory in Louisville, Kentucky. AP

The global demand for crude oil expected to peak in 2030

112 in million barrels per day. Global demand for crude oil is expected to peak in 2030 with India, Africa to be major contributors, according to S&P. The demand for crude oil in India will see its peak in 2040. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Understanding simultaneous elections

When did Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections start happening at different points in time? What are the arguments for and against conducting simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and local bodies? What are the constitutional impediments?

EXPLAINER

Ashutosh Kumar

The story so far:
In September, the Union Government notified the formation of a six-member panel to 'examine and make recommendations for holding simultaneous elections' in the Lok Sabha, State assemblies and local bodies. For this purpose, the panel has been entrusted with the task of proposing specific amendments to the Constitution and any other legal changes necessary to enable simultaneous elections. The panel also has to give its opinion on whether the proposed amendments shall require the assent of half of the State assemblies, as stipulated in Article 368. On October 25, the panel had an interaction with the Law Commission to discuss the roadmap to synchronise Parliamentary and Assembly elections by 2029.

Uniform vote: At an election meeting of senior BJP leader Vasundhara Raje Scindia in Udaipur, Rajasthan on November 17. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Demand for simultaneous elections
The first four general elections involved simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. It was possible then as the Congress was in power both at the national and State levels. The bifurcation of elections happened due to the advancing of Lok Sabha elections by the Congress, which after suffering a split in 1969 was looking to secure a majority of its own, riding on the populist appeal of Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. As of now the Lok Sabha elections coincide with the Assembly elections in four States namely Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim.

The proposal to hold simultaneous elections has been pushed by the BJP since it came to power in 2014. After the NITI Aayog backed the proposal in 2017, it was mentioned next year in then President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the joint session of Parliament. He asked parties to have a 'sustained debate on the subject of holding simultaneous elections'. The Law Commission also released a draft report on August 30, 2018, examining the legal-constitutional aspects related to the proposal. Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated the need to hold simultaneous elections in his Independence Day speech in 2019. Most recently, the proposal received support in the Law Commission Report, which is reportedly exploring the feasibility of a common electoral roll.

The case for common elections
The following arguments are being pushed in favour of holding simultaneous elections. First, holding separate elections incurs massive recurring expenditure for the State and the Central government. In case of simultaneous elections, there would only be one electoral roll for all elections and the government would need the services of security forces and civilian officials only once. This would save public money and human resources that can be put to other public causes.

Second, the dense electoral cycle involves prolonged deployment of security and police forces on election duty, thus posing a concern for national security and maintenance of law and order. The administration comes under strain due to the mass-scale transfers of officials within the State, either by the government looking for pliable officers in key positions or by the order of the ECI once code of conduct comes into force. High-ranking officers from other States are also deputed as observers in the poll-bound State. There is a climate of political uncertainty, wherein officials remain perpetually in election mode. Third, holding separate elections comes in the way of development as the enforcement of the code of conduct for a longer period leads to the stoppage of ongoing development work. No new projects can be started during this period and even on-going projects suffer from inertia. Looking to reap the electoral dividend, parties in power invariably indulge in populist schemes and do not commit to long-term investment in primary sectors. This happens frequently, burdening the state exchequer.

Fourth, simultaneous elections would lessen the role of money in elections as campaign finance of parties' would come down. The monitoring of election expenditure by the ECI will also become more effective due to a concerted effort at the national level. Fifth, given the increasing role of divisive politics for electoral gains, the 'one nation-one election' plan would help in reducing the pernicious role of regionalism, casteism, and communalism in mobilising electorates. It would help in bringing issues of national importance on the electoral agenda. And finally, it is being argued that having too many elections creates a sense of fatigue among electorates. Voter turnout at the national level has stagnated in recent elections.

Against simultaneous elections
These are the arguments against the implementation of simultaneous elections. First, the Centre's initiative is being viewed as being antithetical to the federal spirit as there has not been wider consultation with constituent States, especially the ones that are being ruled by non-BJP parties. Second, holding simultaneous elections would most likely push local and regional issues to the periphery. There would be a 'national constituency phenomenon' favouring polity-wide parties due to their comparative advantage in terms of their claim to better serve 'national interest/ national security/national unity' rather than regional parties who will be sidelined for focusing on 'narrow, parochial' issues. Simultaneous elections in a federal polity, would incentivise regional discontent. Third, as far as cost saving is concerned, holding simultaneous elections would require large-scale purchase of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail Machines (VVPAT). Moreover, biennial elections to Legislative councils/Rajya Sabha and by-elections would still be held, costing money and resources. Fourth, frequent elections rather than sagging the enthusiasm of voters keep them enthused, as evident in the comparatively higher percentage of voting in State and local elections. Frequency of elections at different layers also helps in increasing accountability as elected representatives and their parties remain on their toes.

Legal and constitutional issues
Even if the proposal to hold simultaneous elections were to be adopted in principle, it would require a complex and lengthy legal process to implement.

First, at least five Articles in the Constitution shall need amendment. These articles are Articles 83(2) and 85(2) that relate respectively to the duration and dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Also, on the legislative agenda would be Articles 172(1) and 174(2), which provide for the duration and dissolution of the State Assemblies. Article 85 (1) and 174 (2) allows the President and the Governor to dissolve the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha before the completion of their tenure of five years, under the circumstances mentioned in the Constitution. Article 83(2) allows the tenure of the Lok Sabha to be extended for one year at a time in case of an Emergency being proclaimed under Article 352. Article 172(1) makes a similar provision for State assemblies. These provisions would need to be repealed. As of now, after the passage of the anti-defection law enshrined in the 10th Schedule (52nd Amendment Act, 1985) and later the Supreme Court judgment in *S.R. Bommai* case (1994) followed by the High Court judgment in *Rameswar Prasad* (2006), the decision to dissolve the Vidhan Sabha and impose President Rule under Article 356 is subject to judicial review. The Court can revive the Assembly and restore the government if it does not find the grounds of the President's rule to be constitutionally valid as has happened in recent years in the case of Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh.

Moreover, such amendments need not only the two-third-majority support of both Houses of Parliament but also ratification by at least half of the State Legislatures under Article 368. Currently, no party has even simple majority in Rajya Sabha while the States have different parties in power, many of which are not in favour of such amendments.

It would also be much more complex and difficult to link general elections with local bodies elections. This is because local government is a State subject (seventh schedule, List II) and all the State Legislatures have passed separate Panchayati Raj Acts and Municipal Acts, fixing the tenure of these bodies (five years) as per Article 243(E) and 243 (U) respectively. Since all 28 States have their own specific Acts, it would require changes in 56 sets of legal provisions.

What next?
Given the complexity of the issue, likely focus is going to be on how Lok Sabha and Assembly elections can be held simultaneously. Even for that, multiple amendments would be required. Since the proposal involves Centre-State relations, judicial review of the amendment acts shall be a major block. What seems doable is to make an attempt to club as many Assembly elections as possible to be held together or with the Lok Sabha elections in one go and hope that the verdicts favour formation of a stable government. Even for realising this, there is a need for wider consultation across parties and constituent States.

Ashutosh Kumar teaches Political Science at Panjab University, Chandigarh. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

In September, the Union Government notified the formation of a six-member panel to 'examine and make recommendations for holding simultaneous elections' in the Lok Sabha, State assemblies and local bodies.

At least five Articles in the Constitution shall need amendment. These articles are Articles 83(2) and 85(2) that relate respectively to the duration and dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Also, on the legislative agenda would be Articles 172(1) and 174(2), which provide for the duration and dissolution of the State Assemblies.

The first four general elections involved simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. It was possible then as the Congress was in power both at the national and State levels.

Govt. PU college lecturers to boycott classes today

PU college principals and lecturers are opposed to the entrusting of supervision of DDPUs to the CEOs of zilla panchayats

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Opposing the government's decision to entrust the supervision of the Deputy Directors of Pre-University Education (DDPU) to the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of zilla panchayats at the district level, government PU college principals, lecturers, and non-teaching staff unions have decided to boycott classes on Friday and stage a protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru.

The unions have also opposed the merger of PU examination board with the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) and termed the three annual examination system for PU students "unscientific".

Circular

The Under Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy (Pre-University) issued a circular on October 18 to entrust the supervision of the DDPUs to the CEOs of zilla panchayats at the district level to efficiently manage the day-to-day work of the the DDPU offices. According to the circular, the supervision of the DDPUs of Kalaburagi and Dharwad zones will come under the

They are against the merger of PU examination board with the KSEAB and have termed the three annual exam system for PU students 'unscientific'

Additional Commissioner of the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL) and the CEO of zilla panchayats concerned, while the Bengaluru and Mysuruy zones' DDPUs will come under the zilla panchyats concerned.

"Earlier, the supervision of all the DDPUs came under the Director of the DSEL (Pre-University). Now, the government has entrusted the supervision of the DDPUs to the CEOs of ZPs and the Additional Commissioner of the department. It has created unnecessary pressure on the DDPUs. If there is any official meeting with the Director of the department, they should take permission from the ZP CEOs and the Additional Commissioner of the department. It is nothing but harassment and the government is planning to destroy the department. This may complicate the activities of the department and lead to delays," said Ninge Gowda A.H., president of the Karnataka State Pre-University Colleges Lecturers' Association.

"Despite opposition from principals and lecturers of government PU colleges, the government has forcibly merged the PU examination board with the KSEAB. In addition to this, the government has decided to conduct three annual examinations for PU students without consulting any principals, lecturers or experts. This is unscientific and illogical. It not only reduces the competitive spirit among students but also creates unnecessary pressure on the teaching faculty," he said.

'No response'

"The government is planning to merge the Pre-University Education Department with the DSEL in a phased manner. We opposed this, protested, and submitted a memorandum on November 23 in every district centre. But there is no positive response from the government. So, we have decided to boycott classes and stage a protest at Freedom Park on Friday. Around 6,000 PU college principals, lecturers, and non-teaching staff will participate," Mr. Ninge Gowda said.

11-day Bengaluru Habba kicks off with bullock cart procession from Chickpet

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar formally declared the 11-day Bengaluru Habba open by flagging off a traditional bullock cart procession from Chickpet on Thursday.

Bengaluru Habba is a festival celebrating the art, culture, and life of Bengaluru and the government is providing all support for this event, he added.

"This is the place from where Kempe Gowda built an inclusive Bengaluru with people from all castes and creeds. Bengaluru founder Kempe Gowda is believed to have taken a procession of bullock carts in four different directions from Chickpet. It is appropriate that Bengaluru Habba is also kicked off from this place," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar flagging off a bullock cart procession at Chickpet in Bengaluru.

From next year, Bengaluru Habba would be held in each ward and Assembly constituency so that people could participate in their neighbourhood itself, he said.

Many people, organisations and associations, including Unboxing Bengaluru, are organising Bengaluru Habba with their resources and the government is supporting it. "It is important that people make this a big success so that the culture of Bengaluru is alive," Mr. Shivakumar said.

Metro commuter gets back her lost gold ring, thanks to Home Guards

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Divya Priyadarshini, a bank employee who regularly takes Namma Metro from Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna station to Benniganahalli, lost her gold ring worth ₹30,000 in transit on November 27. She reported the loss to Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL) customer care.

Near the ladies' coach

To her luck, the ring was returned safely, thanks to two Namma Metro Home Guards Shilpa G.R. and Eshwaramma, stationed on Platform 2 at Benniganahalli station, who found the lost gold ring near the ladies' coach on a train and ensured it was safely returned to its owner.

BMRCL officials said Ms. Shilpa and Ms. Eshwaramma, who were on duty, stumbled upon the ring on Platform 2 in Benniganahalli station on the same day around 6.45 p.m. The Home Guards immediately handed over the ring to the assistant safety officer.

Handed over

BMRCL officials cross-referenced the description provided by Ms. Priyadarshini and handed over the gold ring to its rightful owner.

Ms. Eshwaramma said, "Upon noticing the ring near the ladies' coach during the train's halt, we identified it as a gold item. Immediately, we secured the ring and promptly handed it over to the safety officer. Subsequently, we reached out to the owner, and returned it by verifying the receipt as proof of purchase."

Injured toddler brought to NIMHANS dies on premises

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Tension prevailed at NIMHANS for some time on Thursday when relatives of an 18-month-old boy with head injuries, who succumbed on the premises on Wednesday, staged a protest.

The toddler was rushed to NIMHANS from the Hassan government hospital through zero traffic within 1 hour and 40 minutes.

The parents of the boy, from Gonibeedu in Sakleshpur, alleged a delay in treatment, but NIMHANS authorities maintained that the relatives were informed about the poor prognosis and unavailability of a ventilator bed.

The boy slipped from the stairs while playing and sustained severe head injuries. He was rushed to a local hospital and then to Hassan district hospital where the doctors referred him to NIMHANS. Based on the parents' request, the police arranged zero traffic to shift the boy. "Even though the boy was brought to the hospital in record time, he was not admitted citing lack of bed even after one hour. This was despite informing the hospital well in advance," the parents alleged and added that their son succumbed to his injuries while waiting to get a bed.

The boy's relatives staged a protest alleging doctors' negligence. The jurisdictional Siddapura police reached the spot to pacify the protesters. The hospital submitted a report to the police which will be transferred to Gonibeedu police.

NIMHANS, in a statement, said, "The patient's family was explained about the poor prognosis based on the clinical and radiological findings and that the patient was unlikely to improve with treatment. The unavailability of a ventilator bed was also communicated. The patient had severe bradycardia and cardiac arrest and could not be revived despite best efforts."

FIR against Kambala organisers for putting up banners illegally

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Sadashivanagar police have registered an FIR against the organisers of the Bengaluru Kambala for allegedly putting up banners in and around Palace Grounds illegally.

Based on a complaint filed by K. Siddagangaiah, Revenue Inspector, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the police charged the organisers under the Karnataka Open Place Disfigurement Act.

Mr. Siddagangaiah said that over 100 banners were put up in and around Mehkri Circle and on Ballari Road by the organisers to convey wishes and compliments, without permission. This violated the court order and BBMP rules, he said. He roped in a team, pulled down all the banners and buntings, loaded them in three trucks, took them to the head office, and filed a report.

THE HINDU
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Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt.: Saran), Bihar-841221

E-Open Tender Notice No.:- S/RWP/E/32/2023-24, dated : 29.11.2023. Principal Chief Materials Manager /Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites **online "e-Open Tender",** through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website **www.ireps.gov.in,** for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs. **SN 1, Tender No. :** 01231063A, **Short Description of item :** Sampling spoon, **Quantity :** 3000 Nos., **Date of Tender Closing/ Opening :** 28.12.2023 at 14:00 Hrs., **1.** Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is **www.ireps.gov.in. 2.** The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including **Addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation** with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the all concerned newspapers.

PCMM, Rail Wheel Plant, Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt./2023-24/82

City Municipal Council, Chikkamagaluru

Office: 08262-230420 Fax: 0862232272 Commissioner: 08262-232272 Helpline:08262-232222 E-mail: comm_ckg@yahoo.co.in Website: www.chikmagalur.gov.in

No.: CMC/CKM/15th Fin/CR/02/2022-23 Date: 24.11.2023

e-Procurement Short-term Tender Notice

Tender is invited through e-procurement from Authorised Sellers/Distributors/Supplirs for supply of below mentioned Vehicle/Materials under 15th Finance Scheme.

Sl.No. 1. Details of the vehicle: DMA/2023-24/IND0862 **E.M.D.(in Rs.):** 1,34,000/-

Sl.No. 2. Details of the vehicle: DMA/2023-24/IND0860 **E.M.D.(in Rs.):** 1,12,000/-

Sl.No. 3. Details of the vehicle: DMA/2023-24/IND0854 **E.M.D.(in Rs.):** 1,20,000/-

Cost of Tender Form – As per e-procurement. Time Period – 02 Months

1. Last date for submission of Tender in e-procurement portal: 02.12.2023 up to 17.00 Hrs. **2.** Date of opening Technical Bid: 04.12.2023 at 17.30 Hrs. **3.** Date of opening Financial Bid: 06.12.2023 at 17.30 Hrs.

Further details can be obtained during working hours of this office and from https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in If there are any changes, they will be published only in e-procurement and will not be published in newspapers.

Sd/-Sri.Varasiddhi Venugopal, President
City Municipal Council, Chikkamagaluru.

Sd/- Amrutesh Chennakeshava, Vice President
City Municipal Council, Chikkamagaluru.

Sd/- B.C. Basavaraju, K.M.A.S,
Municipal Commissioner, City Municipal Council, Chikkamagaluru.

DIPR/ckm/No.118/ksmca/23-24/827

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client SRI. QAMRUL ISLAM, S/o. Sri. M. Islam is entered into a sale agreement 28-11-2023 in respect of the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration with its owner SRI. M. V. SHIVA PRAKASH, S/o. Late Sri. Viswanathappa, Residing at No.206, Niranjan Central Apartment, 2nd Main, 5th Cross, BTM 1st Stage, Bangalore - 560029.

If any persons, banks, financial intuitions etc., having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

residential apartment bearing residential apartment bearing Flat No. S-206, with Two BHK, measuring 1253 Sq. Ft. of super Built up area in Second Floor of apartment building known as "NIRANJAN CENRTAL" BBMP Old Khata No. 12/27 S206, New No.11/29, BBMP PID No. 64-75-11/29 is constructed in the land bearing Corporation No.11, (old No.11, 12, 27 & 1/5A) PID No.64-75-11, situated at Main Road, Narayanappa Garden, New Gurappanapalya, Bangalore, along with one covered car parking space in Stilt Floor, together with 2.10% of undivided share.

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY, ROOPA. B, & B.N. JAGADISH KUMAR, Advocates, # 96, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Maruthi Nagar, Madiwala, Bangalore- 68, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832
Bangalore, Date : 29-11-2023

EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No.STCVSKP-OFCEQPSHIFT-OT111, Dated. 18.11.2023

Name of Work: SHIFTING OF ALL INDOOR TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENTS ALONG WITH ALL ACCESSORIES FROM THE EXISTING OLD OFC HUT TO THE NEW OFC HUT (CONSTRUCTED DURING DOUBLE LINE WORKS), AND SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, WIRING, TESTING, COMMISSIONING OF ALL THESE TELECOMMUNICATION CIRCUITS ALONG WITH ALL OTHER ASSOCIATED MISCELLANEOUS SIGNALLING AND TELECOMMUNICATION WORKS AT 21 STATIONS IN WALTAIR DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY, IN THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH, ODISHA & CHATTISHGARH, INDIA.

Approx Cost of the work: ₹3,42,82,576/-, **EMD/Bid Security to be deposited:** ₹3,21,400/-, **Completion Period of the work:** 12 (Twelve) Months.

Tender Closing Date & Time: 12.12.2023 at 1200 hrs.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any Change/ Corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered or IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers/bidders should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions including check lists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of Tender form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of chapter 2 of Tender documents.

Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer (Con)/ Koraput

PR-93/CG/23-24

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LEGAL NOTICE

Before the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (Special Sub Court, Tirunelveli)
M.C.O.P. No. 624 / 2022
Rajagopal ...Petitioner
-Vs-
P. Venkatachalam,
S/o. Palaniyandi Gounder,
7, RCC 206 2 SG Mutt Road,
Chamraj Pet, Bangalore-560018.
Karnataka State.
...1st Respondent

NOTICE

I hereby informed that my client has filed M.C.O.P.No. 624 of 2022 on the file of Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, (Special Sub Court), Tirunelveli. The said case was posted for hearing **05.01.2024,** 10.00 A.M Hence, I requested the first respondent to make appearance in person or through his council, or otherwise the said case will be heard in his absence.

T. Ramkumar, M.A.,M.Phil.,B.L
Advocate, Palayamkottai,

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E-AUCTION SALE PROCLAMATION NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

Sale of immovable asset under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as the Act).

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described secured asset is mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken on by the Authorised Officer of M/s. IndusInd Bank Ltd. (the secured creditor). The Property will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on 20/12/2023** for recovery of **Rs.3,58,81,445.32/- (Rupees Three Crore Fifty Eight Lakhs Eighty One Thousand Four Hundred Forty Five and Paisa Thirty Two Only) as on 31.10.2023** with further interest at the contractual rate and costs, charges and expenses due to IndusInd Bank Ltd., from the **borrower Inch Furniture Co-Borrowers/Guarantors : Mr. G Balaji, Mr. Vinodh Gurusamy, Mr. Krishnappa Gopal, Mrs. Bhavana Balaji, Mrs. R. Sankari**

Description of Immovable properties : All the piece and parcel of the residential property bearing Flat No. G-1 and , Present Municipal No.62/19/G-1, P.I.D. No. 36-78-19/G-1, Ground Floor with super built up area of 1600 Square Feet and one car parking space in the basement and 500 square feet of undivided share in the property bearing site No.62, Present municipal No.62/19, situated at 2nd main road, the national housing co-operative society layout, Kempapura Agrahara Village, now Prasanth Nagar, ward no.36, Bangalore, measuring East to West (80 + 81.03)/2 feet and North to South 50 feet, measuring all 374.294 square meters and **bounded on the;**East by: 40 feet wide road,West by: Site Nos.67 & 68,North by: Site No.61,South by: Site No.63.

All the piece and parcel of the residential property bearing Flat No. F-1, Present Municipal No.62/19-2/F-1, P.I.D. No. 36-78-19-2/F-1, First Floor with super built up area of 1600 Square Feet and one car parking space in the basement and 500 square feet of undivided share in the property bearing site No.62, Present municipal No.62/19, situated at 2nd main road, the national housing co-operative society layout, Kempapura Agrahara Village, now Prasanth Nagar, ward no.36, Bangalore, measuring East to West (80 + 81.03)/2 feet and North to South 50 feet, measuring all 374.294 square meters and **bounded on the;**East by: 40 feet wide road,West by: Site Nos.67 & 68,North by: Site No.61,South by: Site No.63.

Rs.2,72,50,000/- (Rupees Two Crore Seventy Two Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) Rs.27,25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakhs Twenty Five Thousand only)

Mode of Auction	E-AUCTON
Inspection of Property	08/12/2023 between 11.00 a.m. to 01.00 p.m.

Contact Person and Phone No : Mr. Jansi Rao Mob. 9886090570, Mr. Chakradhari Shubham 9304376755 and Authorised Officer Mr.Varadaraj Mob: 9966078652 vardaraj.devaraj@indusind.com.

Last date for submission of Bid (E-auction) : **19/12/2023 up to 04:00 PM**

This publication is also a Fifteen Days (15) notice to the aforementioned borrower/guarantors under Rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Secured Creditors Website i.e, **https://www.indusindbank.com,** regarding E-Auction/sale of respective property and other details before submitting their bids for taking part in the E –Auction. Bidders may also visit the website **https://www.bankeauctions.com.**

Place: Bangalore, Date: 28/11/2023 **Sd/-Authorised Officer, Indusind Bank Limited**

M BG-BGE

IN THE LIMELIGHT

Cailee Spaeny as Priscilla, in a scene from *Priscilla*. AP

Understanding the stylish and inimitable works of Sofia Coppola

Hollywood's star nepo baby has been criticised of many things, but the director continues to break all the rules of filmmaking with every new project of hers. Similarly, *Priscilla*, her latest film on the life of Priscilla Presley, the wife of rockstar Elvis Presley, does not disappoint

Preetha Jayaraman

You are in your room as a 16-year-old, it's a Sunday afternoon. The streets are sleepy, the fan is turning slowly, you can see the slant of light on the floor, hear the music that is playing at a distance, and everything is a certain way. If a scene in a movie could take you back to this exact moment and fill you with sharp nostalgia for a feeling that you cannot explain, would that make for good cinema?

The three cardinal rules of screenplay writing are: set up, conflict and resolution. Hollywood screenwriting's golden mantra is the three-act structure. However, Sofia Coppola has broken almost all the rules and whispers her own mantra. Her body of work with under ten feature films is a delectable archive of such feelings and moments.

Sofia's women

Sofia, however, has been criticised of many things, like making films that are pointless, superficial, with no character arcs or satisfying resolutions. She has been called Hollywood's star nepo baby – her father is a giant in its fraternity, his masterpiece *Apocalypse Now* seared forever in every cinema lover's brain. When I see the word *napalm*, I still think Francis Ford Coppola. He has produced many of her films and champions her work to date, sharing every press junket about his daughter's work proudly on social media. But Sofia didn't storm into the scene like her father. She shimmered in with her debut feature *The Virgin Suicides*. A suburban coming of age story based on the book by the same title, it is about five sisters trapped in their strict catholic parents' conservative grip and the neighbourhood boys who become obsessed with the sisters. The film doesn't end well (all the Lisbon girls take their lives in a suicide pact) or give any easy explanations, but it lingers in its awkward adolescence, stolen kisses and small town psychological brutality.

Next came *Lost in Translation*, Coppola's film about two strangers who meet in a hotel. Within the oasis of carpeted corridors and smoky bars, two sleepless guests – played by Bill Murray (Bob) and Scarlett Johannson (Charlotte) – form an unusual connection. Both married, set apart by a generation in age, feel something simple unravelling between them –they can talk to each other, they get each other. Could this be love? Amid Tokyo's neon lights, chaotic traffic and tuneless karaoke singing, the two of them wander its streets knowing they are momentarily less lonely by each other's side. In the most iconic top angle shot of the them lying in bed chatting through the night, Charlotte asks Bob if marriage gets easier. The scene is less about their dialogue and more in the way he touches her curled feet as they fall sleep. The film again doesn't end well and there are no easy answers, including the last scene when he hugs her and whispers something in her ear before they part ways, which the audience don't hear. An enigmatic, haunting end.

From Scarlett Johannsen to Kirsten Dunst (*The Virgin Suicides*, *Marie Antoinette*), Sofia has infused her women protagonists with a certain fragile melancholy, a dreamy loneliness that they carry with them in every frame. With the weight of knowing they are destined for more, they are like trapped birds that need to escape. Sometimes Audrey Hepburn-esque , sometimes mysterious unreadable sphinxes, and suddenly childlike in their candour, they capture our imaginations.

Like the boys who can't get over the Lisbon girls, like Bob saying "I guess this is goodbye" with a catch in his throat to Charlotte, Coppola's women never cease; they continue to live in our minds. It's hard to let them go.

"I feel my films are a snapshot of that moment and who I was, where I was, at that time.' Sofia Coppola said to *The Guardian* in 2017. She has imbued a piece of herself in every character she has created at each stage of her life and career.

Aesthetic or sublime?

Sofia's newest film *Priscilla* opened in Venice this year and is in theatres across the globe. It is another film about a woman – this time a teenage Priscilla's love affair, marriage and separation from the legendary Elvis Presley. Reviews stay divided, some calling it fluff and some calling it a delicate telling of a true story.

But, everyone agrees that it is a different take on Elvis's life, seen through the eyes of Priscilla, where she is in the spotlight, not him. Sofia has said in her interviews that she has tried to tell their love story with an unbiased voice, where he is already a superstar and Priscilla an ingenue, without idolising or villainising him. It is an attempt to enter her world and see how marriage to a rockstar much older than her took over Priscilla's adolescence and formed her identity at a time in America when women didn't have one within a marriage. The film is full of poignant moments and beautifully shot imagery, and no easy conclusions according to the reviews.

But, are films about moments worthy of praise and posteriority? Is it just first world feelings captured in sublime lighting? All this decadence, opulence and pretty pictures – what is the point of it all? Is it the privileged making art about the privileged? What are her politics? Where's the real struggle for the protagonists?

These thoughts may be what divides the audience for Coppola's films.

Her die-hard fans love her films and her aesthetic, she has become a brand herself over the years. T-shirts with quotes from her films became a theme for Uniqlo, and she is an ambassador for Chanel. Her fashion sense is as coveted as her process as a film maker. Inimitable, stylish, and fiercely debated over, Sofia Coppola and her films remain ensconced securely in almost every Top 100 film list of the 21st century.

I for one cannot look at a hotel room's bay window without thinking of Charlotte perched on it looking out at the big city or hear the song 'Strange magic' by Electric Light Orchestra without thinking of Lux Lisbon or see cake and not think of the young queen of France sprawled amid pink icing-ed layers of cake.

The writer is a cinematographer who works in the Indian film industry

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Marie Tussaud, the founder of Madame Tussauds museum of wax figures, was born on December 1, 1761. Here is a quiz on the French modeler and her famous museum

Abhinaya. K

QUESTION 1
Madame Tussauds museum now has branches across the globe. But where is the original Madame Tussauds museum located?

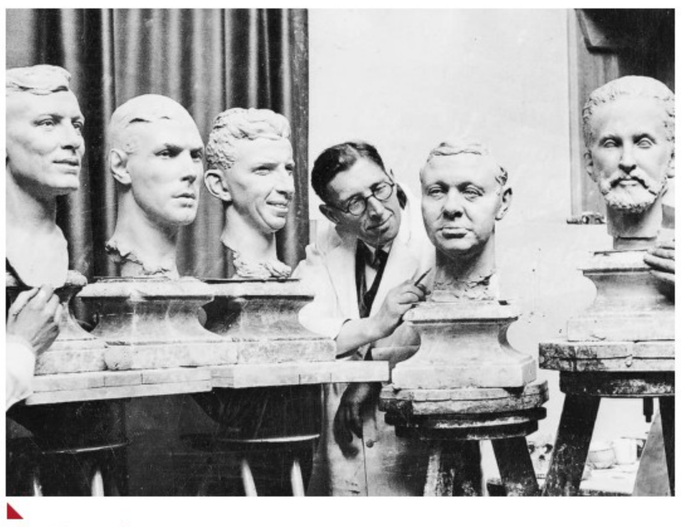
QUESTION 2
In 2008, a wax model was decapitated at the museum located in Berlin. The move sparked off further discussions about the figure's appropriateness. Identify the person whose model was destroyed.

QUESTION 3
The largest statue at the London museum towers at 4.5 meters (14.8 feet) and the smallest is only 14 cm tall. Identify both.

QUESTION 4
The wax figure of this singer was removed from public display following his antisemitic and anti-black remarks. Who is the singer?

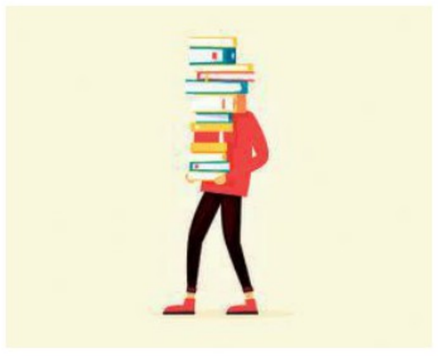
QUESTION 5
This Indian actor has a wax figure at Madame Tussauds in London, Hong Kong and Bangkok. He also has two statues at the one located in Delhi. Name the actor.

QUESTION 6
While Marie Tussaud is the founder of the museum, it is currently globally managed by which company?



Visual question:
Identify the modeler who was a previous head of the museum and his relationship with Marie Tussaud. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Gujral started his political journey with this party first. **Ans: Communist Party of India**
2. Gujral led this ministry during the Emergency in the Indira Gandhi led cabinet. **Ans: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**
3. Gujral represented this Lok Sabha constituency. This was his opponent in the 1991 general elections in Patna. **Ans: Jalandar; Yashwant Sinha**
4. This person coined the term "Gujral doctrine". **Ans: Journalist Bhabani Sen Gupta**
5. The submission of this commission's report led to the fall of the I.K. Gujral-led government. **Ans: Jain Commission. The Commission spoke of the role of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in helping the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka. The Congress party wanted them to be dropped from the government, which Gujral refused.**
Visual: Identify the person to the right of Gujral. **Ans: Satish Gujral, a painter and I.K. Gujral's brother**
Early Birds: Varghese Joseph| Sadhan Kumar Panda



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Sir, Mr. E. P. Pradeep, Kinnasery, wants to know the meaning of 'Dutch courage'."

"Dutch courage is courage that one gets from heavy drinking. The Dutch were once considered heavy drinkers. Pot-valour is also courage that is provided by liquor. A person is said to be pot valiant when he acts courageously as a result of heavy drinking. English has a number of synonyms for 'drunk' and most of them are slang. Here are some: loaded, pickled, stewed, boiled, fried, sozzled, tanked, zonked, oiled, tipsy, tiddly, tight, squiffed, cherry merry, gold headed, boozed up, crocked, fish-eyed, frazzled, glued, high, in the suds, lit up like a Christmas tree, lubricated, soused, stifflicated, woozy. There are more synonyms for 'intoxicated' than for any other word in the English language."

"Ms. Shailaja, Bhubaneswar. wants to know how to use the word 'abject'."

" 'Abject' means 'degraded, despicable, miserable'. It often goes with 'poverty'.

I am appalled at the abject poverty of our people.

We are getting as used to the expression 'abject poverty' as we are to poverty. Sensitive writers consider 'abject poverty' as a cliche. Abject fear, abject humiliation, abject cowardice, abject surrender, abject sinner are some of the frequently used expressions. The 'a' in 'abject' is pronounced like the 'a' in 'man', 'ject' is pronounced like the 'ject' in 'inject'. The stress is on the first syllable."

"Sir, Mr. N. Dhanasekar, Main Hostel, PSG College of Technology, Coimbatore, wants to know the exact meaning of 'ambidextrous'."

"When a person can use both his left and right hands equally well, you say that the person is ambidextrous. One who is good in two media is also said to be ambidextrous. For example, one who can write prose and poetry equally well is considered 'ambidextrous'. Another meaning of 'ambidextrous' is 'deceitful'. 'Ambidextrous' is also spelt 'ambidexterous'."

"Sir, D. P. Karunakar Rao, Hindusthan Shipyard Ltd., Visakhapatnam, wants to know the meaning of the sentence 'Moonlighting is the only way to pay the bills'."

" 'Moonlighting' is of American origin. It meant 'to hold a night job in addition to one's regular employment'. Now it is used rather loosely to refer to any person who has two paid jobs. One is done during office hours, another outside office hours. 'Moonlighting' is used these days in British English also.

He is moonlighting as an auto mechanic."

"Sir, Mr. S. Udaya Suriyan, Dr. Jagannathnagar Road, Coimbatore, wants to know whether the sentence 'I am awaiting for his reply' is correct."

"No, 'await' is not followed by 'for', but 'wait' is.

I am awaiting his reply.
We are awaiting her arrival.
I am waiting for his reply.
We are waiting for her arrival.

'Await' somebody or something, but 'wait for' somebody or something."

Published in The Hindu on March 6, 1990.

Word of the day

Fidgety:
nervous and unable to relax

Synonyms: itchy, restless, antsy, fretful

Usage: *He gets nervous and fidgety when he has to visit the doctor.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/fidgetypro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈfɪʤɪti/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

UP EMERGES AS A PROMINENT EDUCATIONAL HUB

More than 1.92 crore children enrolled under School Chalo Abhiyan

More than 1.40 lakh schools revamped under Operation Kayakalp Scheme.

Free education for girls till graduation

1.64 lakh teachers appointed in education department.

- 280 new Government Inter Colleges and High Schools operational, 60 new inter colleges approved
- 37 new high schools and 14 new inter colleges constructed in unserved areas
- 648 Kasturba Gandhi Girls Schools upgraded upto 12th class
- 77 new hostels constructed for girls of weaker sections
- 60,000 headmaster trained through Diksha App under the School Leadership Development program
- 16 Atal Residential Schools being run for the children of labourers and construction workers
- National and State Award-winning teachers provided with free travel in UPSRTC buses
- UP emerges as a hub of higher education with 84 universities and 05 institutions of national importance
- 16 lakh tablets / smartphones distributed to meritorious students
- Distribution of 2.09 lakh tablets to teachers of Council Schools
- The government plans to have at least one university in every district
- UP has six universities with A++ grading from National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). These are Lucknow University; DDU University, Gorakhpur; CCS University, Meerut; MJP Rohilkhand University, Bareilly; BBAU, Lucknow and CSJM University, Kanpur
- 74 proposals for investment in the higher education sector received at the GIS held in February this year
- There are 201 government polytechnics in addition to 1,372 private sector diploma-level institutions
- More than 83,000 diploma holders benefitted with the CM Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme
- Pehle-UP project implemented to raise the quality of higher education
- 40,000+ Shikshak Sankuls facilitate teacher capacity buliding through peer-to-peer learning
- Every week, three courses shared with teachers for professional development. This includes NIPUN Bharat competencies, classroom transformation, etc.
- 3,988 MBBS seats increased in the state. Also, 1,747 seats increased at the PG level courses in medical education
- 7,000 seats increased in nursing courses while 2000 seats increased in paramedical courses
- Government plans to have at least one medical college in every district
- Currently there are 65 medical colleges in the state. Other 22 medical colleges are under construction
- Mission Niramaya is a visionary program whose primary goal to revolutionise medical education and uplifting the quality of nursing and paramedical staff in the state
- Every district holding Shiksha Chaupals to help in learning process of the children
- Government has taken many other initiatives under the 'Skill India Mission

UTTAM SHIKSHA KA AADHAR-DOUBLE ENGINE KI SARKAR

Information & Public Relations Department, Uttar Pradesh

Lurking danger: Electrical wires on a street in the K.R. Market area in Bengaluru. K. MURALI KUMAR

Wired web: Surging electrical accidents in Bengaluru

Despite the focus on infrastructure development in the city, which includes some mega projects, electrical safety is often compromised, with 607 lives lost in the past five years, reports **Jahnavi T.R**. A recent accident brought the focus back on what must be done to protect citizens

On November 19, after celebrating Deepavali in Tamil Nadu, 23-year-old Soundharya and her nine-month-old daughter Suviksha returned to India's IT capital, Bengaluru, along with her husband Santosh Kumar. After deboarding a bus at Silk Board junction, the family took a bus to Hope Farm junction in the city's eastern part.

What followed were moments of horror. The young mother and her baby were charred to death on the footpath they were walking on. They had stepped on a live electrical conductor that had snapped. Kumar, who tried to save his wife and daughter, also suffered an electric shock. The tragic accident caused an uproar in the city, with the public and political leaders from the Opposition demanding swift action and accountability.

However, this was not an isolated incident. According to statistics shared by the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom), which has jurisdiction over eight districts, including Karnataka's capital, between the financial years 2018-19 and 2023-24 (until October), there have been 607 fatal electrical accidents. While 572 of them were non-departmental (members of the public), 35 of them were departmental. Apart from this, there were also 203 non-fatal, non-departmental accidents, and 168 non-fatal departmental accidents in these five years.

In January this year, Gautham, a 26-year-old Bescom lineman, died of electrocution while repairing the F-29 feeder on Magadi Road. In September 2022, another 23-year-old woman, Akhila, who was also the breadwinner of her family, died from electrocution in Varthur after falling on an advertisement hoarding on the divider of a flooded road on a rainy evening.

"There is no way to walk on the footpaths in the city now without worrying about your safety. There are so many wires either dangling from poles or bunched up on one side of the footpath. How can people distinguish which one is a live wire and which one is an optical fibre cable, especially when they are walking around at night? My mother has now stopped walking on footpaths for this reason," said Kiran Kumar, a resident of Haralur.

Kinds of accident

According to experts, 400 to 600 electrical fatalities occur every year across Karnataka. Apart from snapped conductors, the other common electrical hazards include building fires due to short circuits, flammable items placed near switchboards or electric panels, improper earthing, and electricity leakage.

A former officer of the Electrical Inspectorate spoke of how, in the last 10-15 years, electrical accidents have increased in rural areas due to haphazard drawing of cables, among other things. "For example, for the Niranthara Jyothi scheme (which aims to ensure 24-hour uninterrupted power supply in rural areas), they have drawn new lines along the old lines, causing interference. When lines pass too close to each other and come into contact, it might result in sparks and subsequently in the snapping of conductors, which causes accidents," he explained. He added that the victims of such accidents are usually labourers who work with contractors.

Animals have also been victims of electrical accidents over the years. "At least 20-25 elephants die every year in forest areas where branches fall and break or cause electricity lines to sag. Even in villages close to forests, there are fences which are electrified, and animals die when they encounter them," the retired officer said.

> Periodically, with respect to everything electricity in Karnataka, the KERC should order compliance audits to bring some order to the chaos. If these audits happen in at least one aspect [of electrical equipment] every year, there will be some fear, even among Escoms.
>
> **M.G. PRABHAKAR**
> Former member of the advisory committee, KERC

Electrical accidents in Bescom jurisdiction

Year	Department		Non-department		Total
	Fatal	Non-fatal	Fatal	Non-fatal	
2018 - 19	8	47	128	44	227
2019 - 20	9	20	83	37	149
2020 - 21	4	21	56	29	110
2021 - 22	7	31	101	42	181
2022 - 23	6	28	128	31	193
2023 – 24 (up to October)	1	21	76	20	118
Total	**35**	**168**	**572**	**203**	**978**

Source - Bescom

Electrical wires running close to buildings in an area near S.P. Road in Bengaluru. K. MURALI KUMAR

An open electrical box on Mysuru Road in Bengaluru. K. MURALI KUMAR

In urban areas, the problems mostly arise out of rapid, unplanned development and construction. "The buildings are constructed dangerously close to the electric lines. While they comply with regulations on the ground floor, as the building goes up, they protrude towards the road, and this results in deaths during construction. Neither does the electricity department concerned nor do the local authorities issue any notices [to contractors for violating construction regulations]," he said.

Lack of action

After the electrocution case at Hope Farm junction, Karnataka's Energy Minister K.J. George announced that four investigations would take place to determine the details of the case. The National Human Rights Commission and Lokayukta took suo motu took cognisance of the matter, and demanded reports. However, questions have been raised about the presumed silence of the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission, the watchdog of electricity in the State.

Advocate Shridhar Prabhu, who has represented many electricity-related cases, pointed out that while there have been no systematic changes in the last few years when it comes to electrical accidents, a legal resolution has remained a challenge and the KERC has remained quiet.

"For any electrical installation to take place in the State, its safety must be approved by the Chief Electrical Inspectorate. Yet, it is a lacuna that when an electrical accident occurs, they are not held responsible. The State should also be equally responsible as they are the ones who constitute the Inspectorate. Similarly, the KERC issues licences to distributors, and it takes no action when gadgets are burnt or when there is a loss of life or limb. Let alone suo motu cognisance, they do not take action even when a complaint is filed," Prabhu alleged. "All four – the electricity supply companies (Escoms), the State government, the Chief Electrical Inspectorate and the KERC – should be held primarily responsible in these cases," he added.

M.G. Prabhakar, a former member of the advisory committee, KERC, also said the commission had not kept an active watch on the findings of technical audits and compliance audits, which are mandated for transmitters and distributors by the Commission itself. "Periodically, with respect to everything electricity in Karnataka, the KERC should order compliance audits to bring some order to the chaos. If these audits happen in at least one aspect [of electrical equipment] every year, there will be some fear, even among Escoms," he said.

The former officer of the Inspectorate also said the guidelines issued by KERC were only on paper and not being implemented. "The commission should take stringent action, and a safety committee should be formed with members from Escoms, KPTCL, and the inspectorate to implement these things. The KERC can also take up a comprehensive programme with a pilot project in a sub-division where they can create a safe electricity zone and correctly address the lacunae and unsafe practices and make it a model to follow." He added that in order to reduce accidents, there should be some focus on the quality of equipment and the kind of work provided by escoms.

Experts emphasised that despite so many electrical accidents occurring every year, the victims often did not know what legal routes they could take or how they could apply for compensation. "People do not know who to approach. There is no sufficient publicity about legal awareness. People think it is like regular litigation that takes a few years. They should know about the strict liability principle (a compensation) or writ petitions (processed sooner than regular cases)," Prabhu said.

However, he added that unlike the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal, there were no legal services available for victims. "The State should either constitute a tribunal to adjudicate the victims' claim or give MACT the power to adjudicate even in these cases to determine the quantum of compensation." He also said that the State and Escoms should provide legal services and fund the litigation of the victims, and group insurance schemes should be introduced for all electrical consumers in the State.

Steps by Escoms

After the recent electrocution deaths, officials of Bescom said internal meetings were held to determine the places and equipment that need immediate attention, and their maintenance and repair work would be taken up immediately. A circular was issued by the Energy Department a few days after the accident to all the Escoms and transmission corporations to implement measures such as training of substation staff about prevention of electrical accidents, creation of awareness among the public about electrical accidents, organisation of Safety Day where awareness is created about best practices and regular maintenance of electrical grids as per the safety manual of KERC and KPTCL, among other things.

The Energy Minister also said that once the investigation reports are out, strict action will be taken against those responsible, while the findings will be used to implement safe electricity measures across Karnataka. Bescom has taken up two projects – Aerial Bunching of Cables (ABC) and Underground Cables (UG). Almost five years after starting them, out of a total of 6,134 km of LT wires, 5,900 km (97%) have been converted into ABC and out of 7,182 km of 11 KV lines, 6,900 kilometres (96%) have been converted into UG cables, until October.

The company had also taken up the replacement of old transformers by special design transformers (erected at a height of about 2 metres to ensure that it does not pose a threat to those who come in contact) in at least 3,000 hazardous locations and the ones which were obstructing pedestrian movement. An official said that the replacement of 40 old transformers are pending.

For assistance in case of electrical accidents, citizens can call 1912, the 24/7 helpline number of Bescom.

One fest to bind them all

The inaugural edition of Unboxing BLR Habba aims to showcase the best of Bengaluru's arts, culture, and innovation

Praveen Sudevan
praveen.s@thehindu.co.in

Best of all worlds Scenes from different events in the city. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Festivals celebrating a city play a unique role. They celebrate the spirit of an urban community and capture its pulsating heartbeat. Unboxing BLR Habba (UBH), the inaugural edition of which will unfold from December 1 to 11, wants to be such a festival.

According to festival facilitator Ravichandar V, the goal is to create a comprehensive citywide event that celebrates Bengaluru's multi-faceted identity. With 55 partners across 12 categories, including performing arts, visual arts, literature, design, technology, food, sport, and more, the festival promises an array of 300 events – free and ticketed – across the city. The 11-day gala has merged pre-existing festivals such as the Bangalore Tech Summit (BTS), Bangalore Literature Festival (BLF), and Bangalore Design Week (BDW) under one umbrella.

The idea for UBH was born from the recently released book *Unboxing Bengaluru: The City Of New Beginnings* by Malini Goyal and Prashanth Prakash.

"During the book's writing, Prashanth, who is active in social and civic issues, felt that Bengaluru needed its own city festival. As the book neared completion in October, he proposed launching it in December. And I volunteered to facilitate the festival," adds Ravichandar.

Coming together

The festival collaborates with numerous cultural spaces within the city, such as BIC, IME, MAP, and Bangalore Creative Circus (BCC).

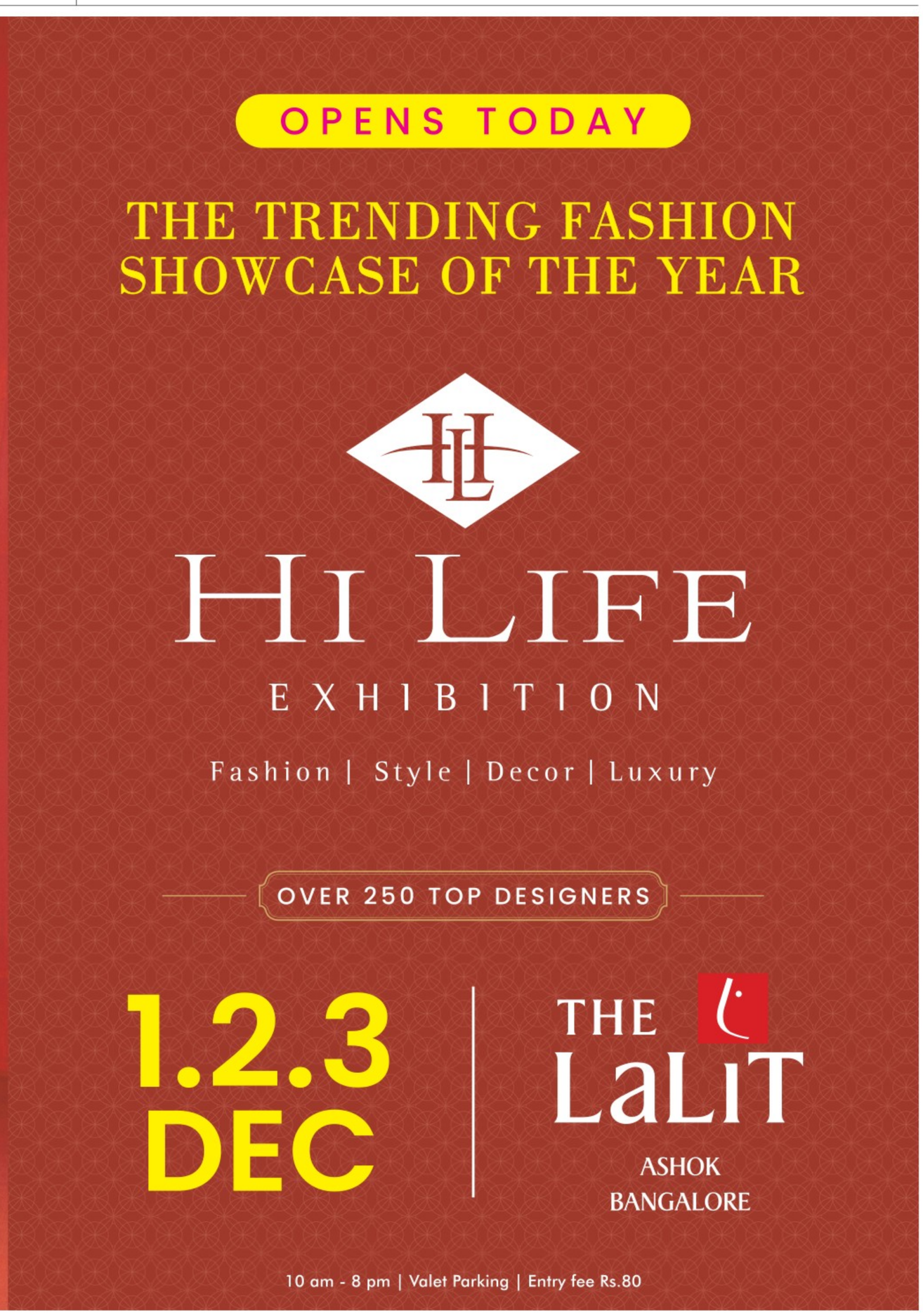
Collaboration of cultural spaces will strengthen the city's cultural identity, believes Kamini Sawhney, the director of MAP. "We are all contributing to a shared cultural community. But no single institution can achieve this alone. Working collectively is far more impactful," she says.

Mansee Shah Thard, co-founder of Lahe Lahe, an arts and culture space in Indiranagar, concurs with Kamini. "This festival addresses a need for the city's cultural spaces to form a network. Art and culture play pivotal roles in community building," says Mansee.

What sets Unboxing BLR Habba apart, according to Ravichandar, is its widespread events – free and ticketed – across multiple locations, making it inclusive as possible. "We want to ensure that individuals who may not be familiar with Kannada culture can also experience and appreciate the traditions of this land," he adds.

Not every visitor will be interested in every e-vent of the festival, but organisers hope they will check out at least three of the 300-plus events.

For more information visit habba.unboxingblr.com



INBRIEF

Siddaramaiah invites Australian investors

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday invited Australian investors to invest in the infrastructure development sector of the State. He held talks with Australian High Commissioner in New Delhi, Philip Green, who met him at his home office Krishna. Investments can be made in sectors such as urban transport and green field road corridor. Mr. Green said he would bring a delegation of investors and organise a round table. Many MoUs have been signed between Karnataka and Australia in several fields.

Nirmala Sitharaman visits Jan Aushadhi Kendra in Bengaluru

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday visited the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra at Yeshwantpur in Bengaluru and interacted with customers. On Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 10,000th Jan Aushadhi Kendra in Jharkhand. She said the Kendra had helped a large number of poor and middle class families. Over 1,800 drugs and 285 surgical instruments were available in the kendras, and drugs cost almost 70% less than the market price, she added.

At 0.29%, State's HIV prevalence rate higher than national average

Karnataka has ninth highest prevalence in the country; HIV test positivity rate on a declining trend since 2017

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

At 0.29%, Karnataka's HIV prevalence rate is higher than the national average of 0.22%. While Nagaland tops the list of States with the highest prevalence (1.61%), Karnataka is in the ninth position, according to data from the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO).

Nagaland is followed by Mizoram (1.13%), Meghalaya (0.58%), Delhi (0.41%), Tripura and Chandigarh (0.38% each), Andhra Pradesh (0.37%), Manipur (0.33%), and Karnataka (0.29%).

December 1 is observed as World AIDS Day and the theme this year is "Let communities lead."

At the national level, the estimated adult HIV prevalence (15-49 years) has declined since the epidemic's peak in 2000 where prevalence was estimated at 0.55% in 2000 to 0.32% in 2010, and 0.22% in 2021. The northeast region States have the highest adult HIV prevalence (2.70% in Mizoram, 1.36% in Nagaland, and 1.05% in Manipur), followed by southern States (0.67% in Andhra Pradesh, 0.47% in Telangana, and 0.46% in Karnataka), according to India HIV Estimates 2021.

The HIV test positivity rate (TPR) in Karnataka, which has been one of the top three States with the highest number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) - after Maharasthra and Andhra Pradesh - has been on a declining trend since 2017.

The HIV TPR in women under antenatal care (ANC) has reduced from 0.06% in 2017-2018 to 0.03% in 2023-2024 (till October end). In general clients tested at the Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres (ICTCs), it has dropped from 0.85% in 2017-2018 to 0.36% in 2023--2024 (till October end).

According to data from the Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society (KSAPS) in 2022-2023, 33,23,365 general clients were counselled and tested with a positivity rate of 0.39% and 14,26,667 women under ANC were counselled and tested with a positivity rate of 0.04%.

In 2023-2024 (till October end), 21,81,824 general clients were counselled and tested with a positivity rate of 0.36% and 8,55,777 women under ANC were counselled and tested with a positivity rate of 0.03%.

Top 10 with highest HIV prevalence rate

National average	**0.22%**	Tripura, and Chandigarh (UT)	**0.38%** each
Nagaland	**1.61%**	Andhra Pradesh	**0.37%**
Mizoram	**1.13%**	Manipur	**0.33%**
Meghalaya	**0.58%**	Karnataka	**0.29%**
Delhi	**0.41%**	Gujarat	**0.2%**

(Source: NACO HIV Sentinel Surveillance Technical report 2021)

Targeted Intervention

KSAPS additional director Ramesh Chandra Reddy V. told *The Hindu* that the most effective means of controlling the spread of HIV is through the implementation of Targeted Intervention (TI) programmes. "KSAPS has been implementing the TI programme covering high-risk group population in all districts," he said.

"The decline in HIV prevalence has been possible through aggressive ANC testing, public-private partnership, periodic reviews and data quality assessment, telemedicine activities and integration with Mother and Child Health programmes. We are gearing up to meet the goal of UNAIDS to eliminate mother to child transmission by 2025 and zero transmission of HIV by 2030," he said.

KSAPS joint director Ansar Ahmed said currently, of the 81 Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) centres, only 71 centres are functional. "The remaining 10 are newly sanctioned ART centres at private medical colleges under National Medical Commission rules and are yet to become functional. Besides, we have 303 functional Link ART centres," he said.

"Of the 3,86,056 cumulative number of HIV cases registered at ART centres till October 2023, as many as 1,85,536 cases are alive and on ART. Over one lakh deaths of patients on ART have been reported so far in Karnataka. However, our prevalence rate is on a declining trend and has fallen from 16th position in 2019 to ninth position in 2021.," he added.

Will set up 188 more Indira Canteens this year: CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that 188 additional Indira Canteens will be opened this year to cater food at subsidised prices for poor people in cities and towns.

After garlanding the statue of saint Kanakadasa at the Legislators' Home in Bengaluru on Thursday, he told mediapersons that Indira Canteens will be started in 225 wards of Bengaluru. Apart from this, he said: "Canteens will be started where it is necessary. Mobile canteens will be set up where there is shortage of space for Indira Canteens."

Mr. Siddaramaiah said Kanakadasa was a social reformer. He preached humanity through his literature and was a universal man who worked hard to build an egalitarian society without discrimination.

Responding to a question about his meeting with MLA B.R. Patil, Mr. Siddaramaiah said Mr Patil had been persuaded to attend the winter session of the legislature.

On November 28, Mr. Patil had written to Mr. Siddaramaiah asking him to order a probe into the charges made by Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda against him about the work executed by Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd. Mr. Patil stated that Mr. Byre Gowda had during the last session of the Assembly spoken in a way that gave the impression that he (Mr. Patil) had given contracts for certain projects to KRIDL in exchange for bribes.

Mr. Patil told reporters in Bengaluru that he would attend the legislature session starting on December 4 in Belagavi.

Frame guidelines to appoint lower rank officers to higher cadre posts, HC directs govt.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has directed the State government to issue necessary guidelines to assign reason for posting an officer belong to the lower cadre to posts designated for the officers of higher grade before seeking approval for such postings or transfers.

A Division Bench issued the direction on a petition between two KAS (senior scale) officers, Prajna Ammembala and Patharaju V., over the posting to the post of Additional Director-1, Department of Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs, which is a post designated for the officers of IAS cadre or KAS (super time scale) cadre.

The Bench said that even though posting of officers belong to lower cadre to the posts designated for higher cadre bear the signature of the Chief Minister on records as per the rules, "such orders cannot be said to be a licit order as we find absence of reasons to enlighten the Chief Minister" on non-availability of eligible persons to be posted to the said posts or why a person of a lower cadre is posted to such posts.

In the present case, the court found that the post of Additional Director-1 was earmarked for higher cadre but both the officers, one who was transferred from that post and the another who was posted to that post, belonged to the lower cadre, and both were contesting about the ineligibility of other to hold that post.

Siddaramaiah tells govt. hospitals to follow Jayadeva in the delivery of health services

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said that it is the State government's goal to ensure that quality healthcare services provided at Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research are made available in all government hospitals.

"When good service is possible from the government-run Jayadeva hospital, it is possible to provide the same quality of service in other government hospitals too," he said.

The new ambulances that were launched under Arogya Kavacha scheme in Bengaluru on Thursday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Speaking at a programme to dedicate 262 '108 ambulances' under the Arogya Kavacha at the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, organised by the Health and Family Welfare Department, Mr. Siddaramaiah called upon doctors to treat poor people who come in worn out clothes with humanity. "They must get good healthcare without discrimination," he said.

The government is committed to providing quality healthcare to the people of the State. Services of 108 emergency ambulances have been provided so that no life is lost for lack of treatment. "More than 840 ambulances are required in Karnataka. Four ambulances are functioning in each taluk," he said.

"Every district should have an MRI scanning facility. Due to the high cost of service in private diagnostic centres, poor people are facing hardship. Thousands apply for the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for this reason alone," he said.

Mr. Siddaramaiah urged Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao to focus more on north Karnataka.

Insurance agent, four associates booked

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Seshadripuram police have booked a case of cheating and forgery against an insurance executive and four others for cheating a nationalised bank with fake documents to get personal loans for her clients.

The accused, Yashaswini, working in the general insurance department of the bank in the Seshadripuram branch, introduced Jayaravi Subbaiah to the bank as a deputy range forest officer in Kodagu and submitted a fake salary slip to avail of ₹20 lakh personal loan in September.

Similarly, the accused brought one more person, identified as Tamanna Tabassum from Mysuru, and introduced her as an orthopaedic doctor and submitted a fake salary certificate to get ₹28.6 lakh personal loan.

The cheating came to light when bank officials verified the documents to find them to be fake. Further inquiries revealed that the accused had roped in touts Umesh V. and Sunil Kumar to create the fake certificates to cheat the bank.

Based on a complaint by Arijit Das, a bank employee, the police have arrested Sunil Kumar and efforts are on to track down others. The accused had even cheated the beneficiaries and taken a huge amount from the sanctioned loan while handing over the money, the police said.

ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
Dr.YSR Paryavaran Bhavan,
Near APIIC Housing Colony, Autonagar,
Vijayawada-520007. Phone No. 0866-2463200,
Website: pcb.ap.gov.in

Date: 01-12-2023

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Tender No.APPCB-12028/1/2019-SS-CL-APPCB 28/11/2023

Bids are invited through GeM portal for supply of field monitoring, sampling and laboratory equipment / instruments. The tender document along with the schedule can be downloaded from **01-12-2023**, **10.30 AM** on **gem.gov.in**. The last date for submission of bids is **30.12.2023 by 05.00 PM**. For details, contact: **9177303271.**

Sd/- Member Secretary
APPCB, VIJAYAWADA

PUBLIC NOTICE

Loss of Original Document

The general public are hereby Notified that my client, Smt. K JAMUNA, W/o Smt K Jamuna, Aged about 57 Years, W/o Sri H Srinivasan, No 354, 7th Cross Road, Yamalur, Bengaluru 560037 has lost the following documents relating to immovable property being All that piece and parcel of the immoveable property bearing V.P.Khatha No 123, Assesment no 54/7, Khatha No 54/7, Survey no. 54/7 Situated at Devarabeesanahalli, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring 54/7, Eastern Side 155 Feet, Western side 120 Feet, Northern side 70 feet and southern side 65 feet totally measuring about 8 ½ Guntas (9282 Square feet) bounded on: East by Government Road, West by: Government Road, North by: Mahendra's property and South by: Remaining property

Lost Documents

1. Original sale deed dated sale deed dt: 05/10/2000, registered as Document no (Document No 5456/2000-1, Book-I, in the Office of the Sub- Registrar, Bengaluru, South)
2. Original Rectification deed dated 15/02/2003 (BNG(U)BLR(S)/15827/2002- 2003, in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Bengaluru, South)

in this regard Police Complaint dt: 6/4/2023, has been lodged by my client, at Karntaka State Police, Complaint in Lost Report No. 0524587/2023. If any person finds the above documents, the same may be handed over to the address stated below.

G.S. SRIKANTESWARAN ASSOCIATES
G.S. RAVISHANKAR ADVOCATES
Veerendrakmar BA
#98/3, 2nd Cross, Masthi Venkatesh Iyengar Road, Covinuram Extn., Near NET School, Sunkenahalli
BANGALORE-560 004.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **Mr. ASHOKA.M.K,** S/o. Sri. Kadaiah, aged about 49 years, AADHAAR No. 5188-9011-9639, residing at House No.149, 2nd Main Road, Health Layout, Shreegandadha kaval, Bengaluru -560091, is intending to purchase the properties morefully described in the schedules herein below from **Sri. S.GANGAPPA,** S/o. Late. Siddaiah, aged about 75 years, **Smt SHARADHAMMA,** W/o. Sri. S.Gangappaand others, all are residing at Hucchananjayanapalya Village, Mantanakurchi Post, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, as they claims that they are the absolute owner in possession of the Schedule Properties and the same are free from all encumbrances, charges, claims or demands of whatsoever nature.

Any person/s having objection to the transaction may lodge their objection/s supported by cogent documents with the undersigned within **FIFTEEN DAYS** from the date of this notice. If no objection/s is/are raised within the said period, my clients would go ahead with the sale transaction in respect of the properties below mentioned deeming there is/are no objection/s from whomsoever and of whatsoever nature.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

ITEM NO.1 - ALL THAT piece and parcel of immovable agriculture land bearing Sy No.182/1 (Old No.182)measuring 05:00 (A/G), excluding karab land of 00:05 (A/G), situated at Hucchananjayanapalya, Mantanakurchi Village, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, which is bounded on: East by : Road; West by : Land in Sy No.182/2; North by : Land belonging to Ramesh; South by : Land belonging to Subbarayappa.

ITEM NO.2 - ALL THAT piece and parcel of immovable agriculture land bearing Sy No.182/2 (Old No.182)measuring 06:10 (A/G), excluding karab land of 00:22 (A/G), situated at Hucchananjayanapalya, Mantanakurchi Village, Nelamangala Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, which is bounded on: East by : Land in Sy No.182/1; West by : Land belonging to Muttharayappa; North by : Land belonging to Ramesh; South by : Land belonging to Subbarayappa.

Sd/- V. C. Chandan, Advocate
LEGAL EYES, Advocates & Solicitors,
No.892, 'Prathama', 8th A Main Road,
Bengaluru, 3rd Stage, 3rd Block,
Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru-560 079.
Place: Bengaluru Date: 01.12.2023

CHD Group to lead global delegation at COP28 in UAE

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

CHD Group - a Mangaluru headquartered global health organisation – will lead an international delegation at Conference of the Parties (COP28) meeting of United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in the United Arab Emirates. COP28 began on Thursday and ends on December 12.

CHD Group will lead a seven-member delegation of experts from South Asia, Africa, and Iran to the blue zone of the high-level meetings, and engage with different stakeholders around the globe in discussions pertaining to public health consequences of climate change, just energy transition, fossil fuel reduction and food security concerns.

COP28 is being held the first time in the history of UNFCCC and COP meetings are where health as an agenda is being discussed and tabled.

CHD Group will hold a side event into the blue zone jointly with Climate Action Network - South Asia, which will focus on just energy transition in South Asia.

Edmond Fernandes, founder and CEO, CHD Group, will address the United Nations' Foundation Pavilion on lowering emissions and promoting equitable food distribution. He will also speak at the Ukraine Country Pavilion on climate sensitivity of food systems and public nutrition, besides how war impacts food security and health systems. Dr. Fernandes is expected to meet several key world leaders.

State govt. to release ₹2,000 per farmer

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As the Central government has not yet released crop loss compensation to Karnataka, the State government has decided to release ₹2,000 per farmer who lost crops owing to drought in the State.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who held a meeting on Thursday, decided to release ₹2,000 in the first instalment. Speaking to reporters, he said the State government has sought permission to provide 150 man-days employment under MGNREGA. But the Centre has not yet given permission.

The State has declared 223 taluks of 236 as drought hit. "We asked to release ₹4,663 crore as compensation for crop loss. But the Centre has not held a single meeting," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY
IN FOND MEMORY OF

02-01-1972 — 01-12-2012

V. MARAGATHAVALLI

AR. Viswanathan (Husband)
V. Meenakshi (Daughter)
L. Vellayan
V. Vijaya Vellayan
V. Anush Lakshmanan
V. Kannathal
AR. Meenakshi (Mother-in-Law)
AR. Umapathy
U. Umayal
U. Arunachalam
U. Ramaswamy

RELATIVES, FRIENDS
and
Employees of **SREE VISALAM CHIT FUND LTD.**

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs D. MAHALAKSHMI
W/o Late Mr V. Dorairaj
(20/04/1937 - 01/12/2022)

We miss your love and affection in every moment of our lives...

Your memory is the pillar on which we lean and draw strength from...

We are living today with your inspiration, motivation & guidance...

You will continue to live with us in our hearts and minds forever...

Fondly Remembered by
Family, Friends & Relatives
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Today's young people are far more aspirational: Shashi Tharoor

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has said that Indians have been able to successfully apply digitisation in various aspects of life including in helping the poorest of the poor.

He was speaking at a fundraising dinner in Bengaluru organized by Rotary Bangalore Midtown Gen-Next to raise funds for pediatric heart surgeries.

During the event, Nikhil Kamath, entrepreneur and co-founder of Zerodha, was in conversation with Dr. Tharoor to discuss the future of India as a global superpower.

"The younger generation is genuinely free of all the shackles that kept my generation and the older generation, the first generation after independence, down."

"Today's young people are far more comfortable, far more aspirational, and far less willing to accept the constraints that earlier generations unconsciously assumed they were subject to."

"That is truly inspiring. You guys are going to carry this country forward," he said.

Applauding India's position as a frontrunner in the digital revolution, Tharoor, however, noted that the progress of the nation would not be possible without the progress of all its people and encouraged the audience to continue supporting such causes.

The organisers of the event noted that the proceeds of the fundraiser will be used to fund the surgeries of 100 children suffering from congenital heart diseases and the collected sum of ₹35,00,000 would be transferred to Needy Heart Foundation, a Bengaluru-based NGO that supports underprivileged people in need of cardiac surgeries.

'Many Musics, One City': An annual music festival

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Music Experience Museum (IME), Bengaluru is hosting an annual music festival titled 'Many Musics, One City', a series of programmes celebrating Bengaluru's multifaceted musical history and heritage from December 1 to 10.

The event will showcase the breadth of musical cultures that have come to be associated with Bengaluru over decades, through an eclectic mix of programs for music enthusiasts, and history buffs alike.

The event will feature performances of Carnatic and Hindustani music, representing the city's traditional roots, alongside contemporary genres such as pop, rock, and electronic music that depict its evolving cultural landscape. Audiences can look forward to guided museum tours dedicated to Bengaluru's music scene from the 1950s onwards, lectures on the histories of music, and performances by contemporary Bengaluru musicians.

"Through this event, we hope to revive and bring together some of these seemingly disparate music histories of the city. The ultimate aim of 'Many Musics, One City' is to create an immersive trip into Bengaluru's musical history, its contemporary scene, and its vision for the future," says Preema John, Director of Indian Music Experience Museum.

At Bengaluru Tech Summit, experts pin hopes on a sustainable future

Panellists point out that efficient application of technologies such as blockchain, IoT and ML could ensure food and water security

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

Panellists at the Bengaluru Tech Summit.

Climate change has been one of the biggest threats of this era posing major challenges to food and water security to not just human beings, but all species. But can science and technology address some of these issues, if not all, and offer a glimmer of hope of a sustainable future? Experts say yes.

"The very basis of global climate action is based on data and technology. Science has given us very clear data estimation that if we follow this path we are not going to survive. That's how all the action related to climate has started," says Guruprakash Sastry, head of climate action at Infosys.

Mr. Sastry was moderating a discussion on 'Tech interventions for a sustainable future' at the Bengaluru Tech Summit.

Importance of data

Technologies like Blockchain, IoT and AI are not often discussed in the context of agriculture or water treatment. However, panelists who took part in the discussion that the efficient application of these technologies in such sectors can bring about drastic changes.

In India agriculture is the largest consume of freshwater resources, using around 70 to 80%. However, technologies that try to solve the water problem, often leave out this piece of the puzzle.

"We are producing a lot of wastewater. But, what is thought of as 'waste' is nitrogen and an input for crops. So, can we connect this wastewater directly to the farmers and reduce the load directly? Even if we impact one to two percent of agriculture that would be huge in terms of the absolute number,' said Sagar N. from Farm & Field crop and digital solutions.

A major challenge in farming has been the deteriorating quality of soil. Mr. Sagar noted that the organic content in soil has reduced by 80%.

This affects the water retention ability of the soil which in turn result in increased consumption of water for the same amount of yield. "Even if we increase organic content in soil by one per cent we can reduce water consumption by 30-35%. It is huge," said Mr. Sagar, adding that there are sensors to measure properties like temperature and moisture of the soil and it is important to have an integrated network where all of them are connected.

"They say an apple a day keep the doctor away. But the nutrition of an apple has gone down so much that we need probably five to six apples a day to keep the doctor away," he quipped.

Jokes apart, he pointed out that there are no measuring equipment for things like seed quality.

"We need data on all things such things and then take informed decisions. We need to do soil mapping, we need blockchain for transparency.

Efficient use of technology

Santosh Subramanian, regional CIO - SA, SEA and Oceania at Veolia, a French water and waste water treatment company, pointed out that using a technology in a responsible and efficient manner is critical to achieving breakthroughs.

"We have an IoT-enabled asset performance monitoring systems. World over these systems are designed from an asset point of view - that is how to optimise the efficiency of an installed asset. If you rethink the design in terms of the value stream right from sourcing of water, treatment of water, consumption, waste water, recycling and so on using technology that brings transparency," he said.

Mr. Subramanian also spoke about the potential of digital twin technology. A digital twin is a simulated digital model of a product or service.

According to Mr. Subramanian a digital pilot plant where properties such as pH, corrosion and so on could be tested without having do large capex investments could be a big game changer. While he agreed that the technology could be used to address issues like power and water crisis at a city scale, he pointed out that it comes with challenges in terms of modelling the data.

While the adoption of technology has led to some key transformations in sectors like agriculture, panelists pointed out that the kind of transformation differs from place to place.

No one size fits all

'Mr. Sagar noted that the European agricultural sector is into precision farming and already use sensors to improve the efficiency.

"For them now the key aspect would be to get better data, better insights, and ways to improve yield, nutrient efficiency and so on. So, those are the technologies which we are working on there. For larger farmers there, we have tractors that have sensors that use imaging and scanning technology. They do real time estimation of the required nutrients and fertigation. So, we are trying to get scanning technologies which can do it even faster and more precise," he said.

Whereas in India, the case if different. The fertilisers are added to the fields manually. Therefore, the technology also has to start from the basics.

"We are starting with precision farming and helping farmers to understand what are the best practices, what is the baseline, what is the amount of yield they can get if they do all of these. Basic sensors that can measure soil moisture, temperature, pH and so on are getting installed," he said.

Blockchain for a sustainable future

While data is paramount to ensure the efficient use of technologies like IoT and Machine Language for sustainable future, Prof. Claudio J. Tessone from department of informatics at University of Zurich pointed out that blockchain and distributed ledgers could be used to augment it.

"One thing that blockchain is very good at is bringing in transparency. For example, we can store supply chains in blockchain and try to trace the journey of the food produce. It also introduces accountability and allow us to understand who are responsible for specific things," he said, adding that storing data locally ends up in siloing of data and prevention of the formation of a larger data ecosystem that would allow stakeholders to make informed decisions.

Seconding the potential of blockchain, Mr. Sastry of Infosys pointed out that the technology could be used to prevent cases like double counting renewable energy certificates (RECs.)

"A lot of people are double counting REC and thus claiming higher percentage of renewables in their operations. Those kinds of things can be addressed with blockchain and distributed ledger,' he said.

Unlocking health and flavour: Sirijeevana lifestyle and millet cooking workshop

Yemen S.
BENGALURU

As the world shifts its focus towards embracing healthier lifestyle choices, the spotlight is now shining brightly on the nutritional benefits of millets. A brainchild of Ask Nurti Foods, Oh My Millets is a start-up founded in 2020 by Karthikeyan Bhardwaj M.M, Ghanashyam K.V., and Jayashree S. with a vision to build a healthy community by providing naturally available superfoods and time-tested ancient recipes through their products and workshops, and to educate and empower millet growers.

Khadar Vali

Millet diet

To share with Bengalureans the superpower of millets, the start-up is organising a workshop called *Siridina Sirijeevana* led by the renowned food and nutrition specialist, also known as the Millet Man of India, Dr. Khadar Vali, at Shree Jayarama Seva Mandali, Jayanagar, on December 3, from 10:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m. The workshop is tailored for a diverse audience, beckoning those eager to adopt a millet diet, individuals seeking a healthier way of life, and those grappling with lifestyle disorders, for both adults and children over the age of 10 years.

Throughout this immersive one-day workshop, participants will be treated to a series of enlightening sessions, tantalizing millet-infused meals, and a transformative step towards a healthier lifestyle. From a hearty lunch to delightful evening snacks and refreshing beverages, the event promises a culinary journey that nourishes both body and mind.

On asked on who should attend the workshop, Ghanashyam K.V., CEO, Oh My Millets says the workshop is open to millet diet enthusiasts, health enthusiasts, lifestyle disorder warriors and children, "The workshop is open to anyone over the age of 10. Individuals looking to adopt the goodness of millets into their dietary regimen and those striving for a healthier and more balanced way of life will be able to learn more about the benefits of millets. The workshop will also benefit individuals combatting various lifestyle-related health issues like diabetes, thyroid, obesity, PCOD/PCOS and many such common diseases that are found in men and women these days".

Cooking with millets

"In this one-day workshop, Dr. Khader and our entire team will talk about the various types of millets, what suits best to each body best, ways of cooking millets, types of utensils to be used and also recipes that will make millets taste like any regular food. The fun and interesting part of the workshop is that all the meals and snacks served during the event will all be made from millets, and hopefully this will change the perception of millets for many Bengalureans", Mr. Ghanshyam added.

Feisal Alkazi talks about his plays 'Things I Know To Be True' and 'After Dark'

Praveen Sudevan
BENGALURU

When you do something over and over again, it becomes a habit, a muscle memory. After a point, you don't necessarily have to think about how to do it. It becomes yet another thing. Feisal Alkazi has been directing plays for over half a century (apart from being an educationist, social activist, and author). In a career spanning 52 years, he has helmed over 200 plays. So, one imagines that direction is yet another thing for him, something he can do in his sleep.

Quite the contrary. "I only direct a play if I don't know how to do it," says Feisal, "If I've done something similar to it earlier, or if it's something I know how to do, why should I be doing it?"

What he says next explains how he has developed the immunity to boredom that comes with repetition.

"Every play, I have to challenge myself. And every play has a different process."

A still from 'Things I Know To Be True'.

The veteran of Indian theatre will be in Bengaluru this weekend to stage two plays – *Things I Know To Be True* (by Australian playwright Andrew Bovell) and *After Dark* (devised by Feisal) – under the banner of Ruchika Theatre Group, a well-known theatre troupe from Delhi known for its socially relevant plays.

The first play, set in Australia, explores the lives of a seemingly flawless family. The facade crumbles as each member confronts life-altering circumstances. Despite the parents' belief in having raised responsible and mature adults, the reality unfolds through comic yet poignant events. The play delves into themes such as the significance of life choices, the complexities of allowing children to mature, the mundane aspects of marriage, and societal expectations concerning sexuality and gender. The play is also being developed into a six-part TV series with Nicole Kidman in the lead role.

After Dark, meanwhile, takes the audience into the lives of the people who use the Delhi metro for everyday commute. The play challenges conventional norms, navigating the ever-evolving landscape of sensuality and sexuality in a rapidly transforming city. It also invites the audience to contemplate themes of desire, consent, and the fluid nature of relationships.

Feisal came across *Things I Know To Be True* while visiting his son in London. "I read it in one sitting. It was incredibly moving. By the end of the play, I was in tears," he recalls.

Though the play is set in Australia, its theme, Feisal believes, will resonate with Indian audiences.

"Both our shows in Delhi got a standing ovation at the end of the play," he adds.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 1, 1973

Ban Order in Bangalore

Bangalore, Nov. 30: The Commissioner of Police, Bangalore to-day promulgated an order under Section 35 of the Police Act prohibiting procession in Bangalore City for one week from to-morrow.

A Section of the students agitating against the reported observations of the Municipal Administration Minister, Mr. B. Basavalingappa on Kannada and those supporting the Minister took out procession in the morning and timely intervention of the police prevented a clash between the two groups. An attempt was made to set on fire a city transport bus near the General Hostel in the afternoon. The police intervened and dispersed the crowd. The bus sustained only minor damages.

Inter-District Movement of Jowar Banned

Bangalore, Nov. 30: Inter-district movement of Jowar has been banned in Karnataka.

The State Government has issued the Karnataka Jowar (regulation of inter-district transport) Control Order, 1973, which extends to the whole State other than the districts of Hassan, Shimoga, Tumkur, Chikmagalur, Kolar, Coorg, South Kanara, (where there is no jowar cultivation).

The ban on inter-district movement of paddy and rice has already been in force for a year now. The Government has not so far yielded to all-round pressure for the removal of the ban.

Jowar is among the main staple foods of Karnataka after rice and ragi, all of which is covered by the levy procurement scheme of the Government.

Karnataka InFocus

THE HINDU

NUGGETS OF HISTORY

Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers

Raichur is a vast 'doab' formed by the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers. Krishna forms the northern border of the district and Tungabhadra the southern border. The abundant water provided by the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers and their tributaries, the fertile black cotton soil and rich mineral resources had created ideal conditions for early human settlements.

The Hutti Gold Mines in Lingsugur taluk

The Hutti Gold Mines in Lingsugur Taluk of Raichur district is one of the oldest gold mines in the worldof Raichur district is one of the oldest gold mines in the world. There are evidences to indicate that the Hutti mine was operational over 2,000 years ago. It is believed that the ancient miners had worked down to a depth of over 2300 feet in this mine.

Raichur Thermal Power Station

With the two biggest thermal power stations – Raichur Thermal Power Station (RTPS) and Yermarus Thermal Power Station (YTPS) – has emerged as a real power hub. RTPS, with an installed capacity of 1720 MW from its eight units and YTPS, with an installed capacity of 1600 MW from its two units, meet most of the energy requirements of the State.

Asia's second-largest market

Raichur was once Asia's second-largest market. With the fertile black cotton soil and abundant water sourced by Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers and their tributaries, the area produced high-quality cotton and fed a number of cotton mills. The construction of Tungabhadra reservoir near Hosapete and its Left Bank Canal encouraged paddy cultivation.

Renovations of the Raichur Fort

The fort located on a hilltop in the heart of Raichur is one of the major attractions in Raichur. The fort saw many fortifications and renovations during the rule of the Chalukyas of Badami, Chalukyas of Kalyani, Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta, Bhamani Sultanate.
The present fort was constructed in 1294 CE during theKakatiya rule.

Maski that unmasked the mysterious Devanampiye and established him as Emperor Ashoka

Maski, Hutti and surrounding areas in the present-day Raichur district had historically been known for their rich reserves of different metals, especially gold

Kumar Buradikatti
KALABURAGI

Devanampiye and Piyadasi (meaning 'Devanampriya' and 'Priyadarshi' in Sanskrit and 'beloved of the gods' and 'one with a benevolent gaze' in English) were the two names that were widely referred to, either separately or together, in the ancient inscriptions and Buddhist literature found across South Asia. Since nobody could authentically ascertain the identity of the person, different historians came up with different opinions. In the course of lengthy debate, some even attributed them to an imaginary personality and a great mythological figure.

The reading of a minor rock edict found at Maski town in Raichur district in 1915, however, solved the puzzle and unmasked the mysterious personality once and for all. The eight-line Pali inscription etched in Brahmi script on a mid-size rock lying at a cave in the middle of an Inselberg convincingly declared that Devanampiye was none other than Mauryan Emperor Ashoka. The inscription that starts with Devanampiye Asoka, is the first discovered edict of Emperor Ashoka to have his name as Asoka in contrast to all other inscriptions discovered earlier that had either Devanampiye or Piyadasi or both to refer to him.

The English translation of the edict is thus:
[A proclamation] of Devanampiye Asoka.

Two and a half years [and somewhat more] (have passed) since I am a Buddha-Sakya.

[A year and] somewhat more (has passed) [since] I have visited the Samgha and have shown zeal.

Those gods who formerly had been unmingled (with men) in Jambudvipa, have how become mingled (with them).

This object can be reached even by a lowly (person) who is devoted to morality.

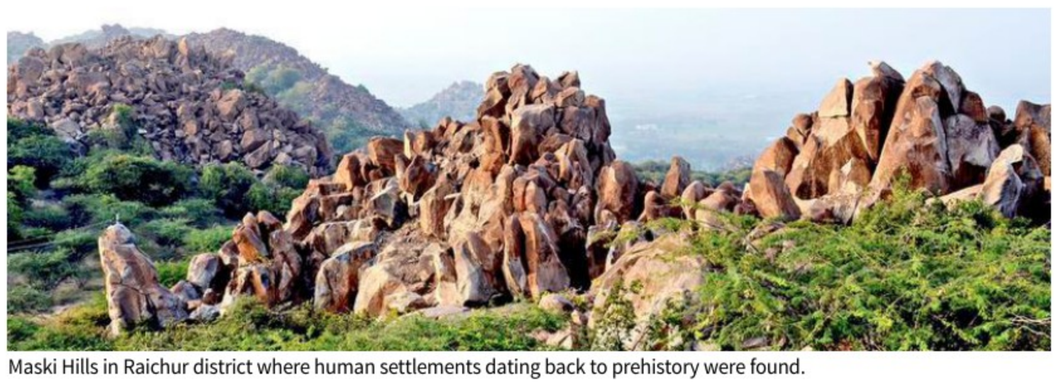
One must not think thus, – (viz.) that only an exalted (person) may reach this.

Both the lowly and the exalted must be told: "If you act thus, this matter (will be) prosperous and of long duration, and will thus progress to one and a half.

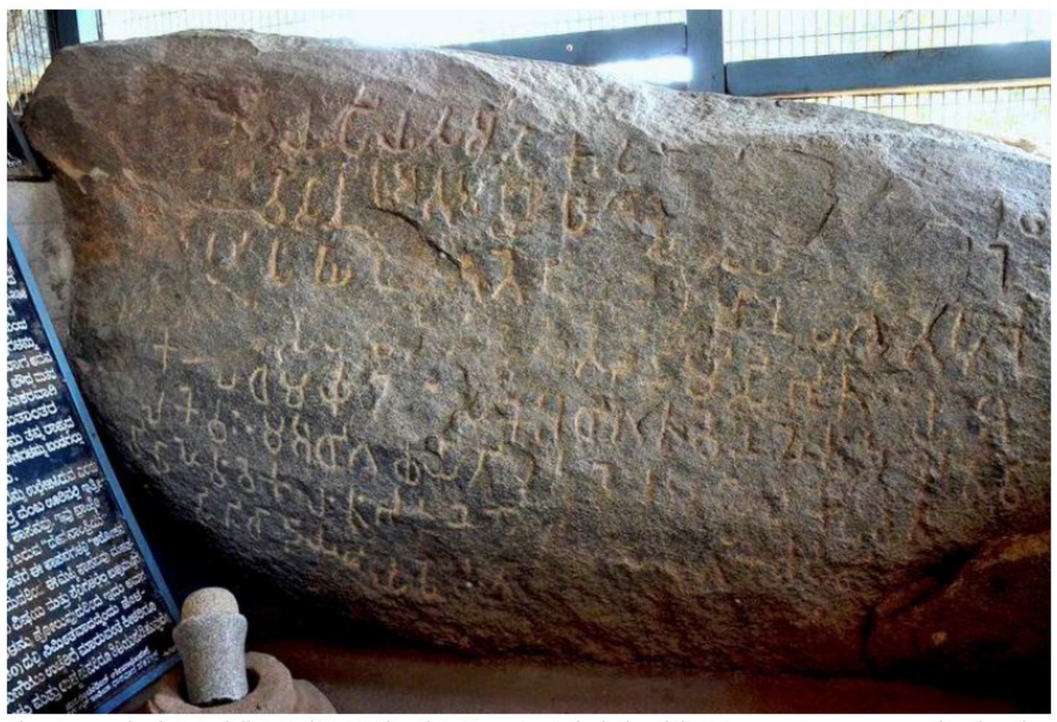
"As leading epigrapher, Prof. K.R. Ganesh put it at a seminar at Hampi Kannada University in 2003, the discovery of Maski edict was an important milestone in the process of constructing the history of Indian sub-continent and South Asia. Because of this edict, historians could conclude that all the edicts having the names Devanampiye and/or Piyadasi discovered earlier belonged to the Ashokan period. Another rock edict found at Gujarra in Madhya Pradesh also mentions Ashoka by his name and titles. But it was discovered much later in 1953," said Prof. Basavaraj Kodagunti, a linguistic scientist and researcher at the Central University of Karnataka near Kalaburagi in Karnataka. Maski is Prof. Kodagunti's native place.

The discovery of the historically significant edict was, in fact, completely accidental. Maski, Hutti and surrounding areas in the present-day Raichur district had historically been known for their rich reserves of different metals, especially gold. It is believed that Hutti goldmine, which is just 35 km away from Maski, is one of the oldest gold mines in the world. There are historical records to indicate that the mine was extensively and intensively explored and mined even during the pre-Ashokan era. The carbon dating test of a timber piece recovered from the bottom of the Hutti mine convincingly indicated the mining activity in the mine about 1,900 years ago. The Nizam Government of Hyderabad rediscovered this ancient mine in the 1880s and its Hyderabad (Deccan) Company began gold mining in 1887.

As part of its ambitious gold exploration plans, the Nizam government sent C. Beadon, a British geologist and mining expert, to explore more gold mines in Raichur Doab, the vast area between two massive rivers - the Krishna and Tungabhadra. Beadon focused his exploration in and around Hutti which had already had a long history of gold mining and indicated rich gold deposits around it.



Maski Hills in Raichur district where human settlements dating back to prehistory were found.



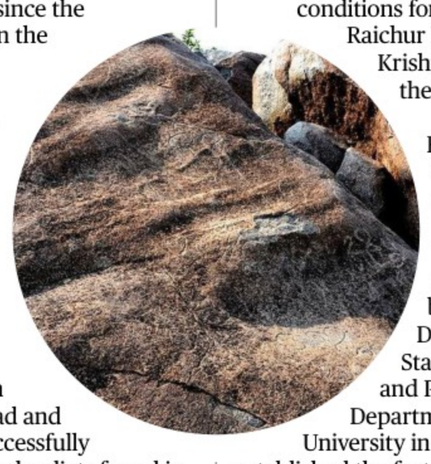
The minor rock edict at a hill in Maski in Raichur district convincingly declared that Devanampiye was none other than the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka.

"One fine morning in 1915, Beadon chanced upon an inscription etched on a boulder lying in a cave formed by a huge rock in one of the rocky hills of Maski. He did not realise that he had stumbled upon something more precious than the gold he was searching for since the script and the language used in the edict could not be read and understood at the time. The importance of the Maski edict was realised after it was read and understood after some time," says Mr. Kodagunti.

"James Prinsep, British antiquary and colonial administrator, is often credited to be the first person to decipher Ashokan edicts. There were so many edicts discovered from all over South Asia. But they could not be read and understood. Prinsep could successfully read and understand one of such edicts found in present-day Afghanistan. The edict that Prinsep decoded the Ashokan edict for the first time was a bilingual and biscriptual inscription. The content of the inscription was in two languages - one in Aramaic language written in Kharosthi script followed by Pali in Brahmi script. With the help of the relatively familiar Aramaic language in Kharosthi script, Prinsep could read the Pali lines in Brahmi script. This paved the way for the deciphering of all Ashokan edicts written in Pali with Brahmi script that were found across South Asia," Mr. Kodaganti says, adding that the edict in Afghanistan convincingly indicated the presence of Aramaic speakers in that region.

Prehistoric settlements:
The Ashokan edict in Maski, which is well-conserved by the natural roof and walls of heavy rock, is given additional protection with an iron wire mesh around it by ASI.

Maski also provides you with a wonderful site for historical research and investigation into human life dating back to the prehistoric period extending from 12,000 BCE to 2200 BCE. Historians believe that the availability of fertile agricultural land and abundant water coupled with plentiful mineral resources had created ideal conditions for human habitation in the vast Raichur Doab formed by rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra and their tributaries.



The Maski Archaeological Research Project (MARP), an interdisciplinary project of five field sessions and one study season conducted between 2010 and 2018 by a team of researchers headed by Andrew M. Bauer from the Department of Anthropology, Stanford University in the USA and Peter G. Johansen from the Department of Anthropology, McGill University in Canada, conclusively established the fact of prehistoric human settlements in Maski hills. The intensive pedestrian survey recorded the location of 271 archaeological sites including a variety of settlements, artefact scatters, grain-milling stations, megaliths, cemeteries, iron-working locales, gold-ore mining and processing areas, rock-art panels and occupied rock shelters in the 35 square km area and around 9000 artefacts spread across the region around the study site.

"Prehistoric settlement in the region is characterised by several small Neolithic period occupations and a comparatively high number of settlement sites that are attributed to the Iron Age based on the distribution of typical diagnostic surface ceramics. Most of these sites are located on the Inselberg hills of the region and the Iron Age settlements are concentrated on and around the central Inselberg, the Durgada Gudda, where there is also evidence of occupied rock shelters during this period and expansive panels of rock art," Andrew M. Bauer and Peter G. Johansen noted in their research paper.

The excavations by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) conducted in Maski in the 1950s have also found the human settlements attributable to the Neolithic period between 3000 BCE and 1200 BCE. Historians also found the connections between the cities in the Indus Valley civilisation and the settlements in Maski by the fact that the stones extracted from Maski quarries were found in the form of artefacts in Harappan cities.

Till today, one can find thousands of prehistoric rock art depicting different animals on the rocks spread across hills around Maski. Unfortunately, many of the images that are easily accessible have recently been discredited by people insensitive to the historical evidences.

The Chola inscription:
Maski has even more to offer you if you are curious about the history. There is an inscription engraved on a rock which gives you an authentic insight into the bloody battle between the heavy armies Chola and Western Chalukya Empires.

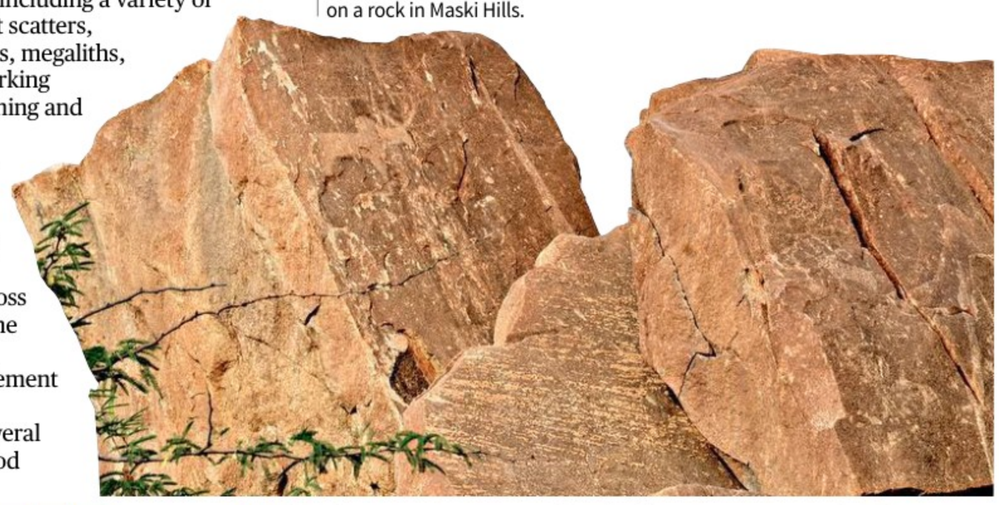
Historians say that the Chola Emperor Rajendra Chola led a massive army of around 9,00,000 soldiers and defeated Chalukya Emperor Jayasimha II in Maski 1019 - 1020 CE. As a mark of his significant victory that gave him unquestionable dominance over vast areas of Deccan, the Chola Emperor left behind a Sanskrit inscription scripted in Tamil on a rock in Maski. The inscription also included the royal slogan and official emblem of the Chola Empire. It is said that this is the farthest Chola inscription in the north.

Unfortunately, little is done to protect the inscription except for a signboard erected by ASI to warn people against any disfigurement. Not even fencing or a roof-like structure is put in place to conserve the historically significant evidence.

Maski is undoubtedly an important historical site as it provides historical evidences for human habitation in the region right from the prehistoric periods and their changing social, economic and cultural life in the subsequent ages. It could be developed into a tourist destination.

Sannati (an archaeological site on the bank of Bhima River in Chittapur taluk of Kalaburagi district where ancient Buddhist Stupa built over 2000 years ago and the stone image of Emperor Ashoka were retrieved in the excavations) and Maski, if put in the Buddhist Circuit of the country and given adequate publicity at the international level, could attract a large number of tourists from across the world, especially from the countries inhabited by Buddhists.

(Above) Chola inscription dating back to 1019 – 1020 CE on a rock in Maski in Raichur district and (below) art which dates back to the pre-historic period on a rock in Maski Hills.



Polling in Telangana ends peacefully; voter turnout low

Hyderabad sees lowest poll percentage; election held for 119 seats with KCR seeking a third term and Congress challenging him based on the 'failed' promises; BJP is the other major player

Right to vote: People standing in a queue to cast their vote at a polling station in Hyderabad on Thursday. K.V.S. GIRI

R. Ravikanth Reddy
HYDERABAD

Telangana witnessed relatively peaceful polling on Thursday with no major untoward incidents. The most disappointing factor was low voter turnout compared to the previous elections, despite the high-octane campaign.

Polling was held for 119 seats with Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao seeking a third term and the Congress challenging him based on the 'failed' promises and anti-incumbency factor coupled with its six promises to the Telangana people. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was the other major player.

The voter turnout stood at 63.94% as per the latest reports. Compared to previous years, low voter turnout was witnessed in majority areas and Hyderabad was the worst with the poll percentage touching 40% compared to 50% in 2018.

Jangaon saw 80.23% and other districts that saw decent voter turnout included Medak (80.28%), Warangal (73.04%), Wanaparthy (72.60%), Kamareddy (71%), Karimnagar (69.22%), Peddapalli (69.83%), Nizamabad (68.30%) and Rangareddy (53.03%).

Polling started at 7 a.m. sharp but the poll percentage did not pick up till lunchtime. The maximum number of voters turned up between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Those who entered the stations before the deadline were allowed to vote.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao cast his vote in his native village Chintamadaka, in Siddipet district along with his wife while TPCC president A. Revanth Reddy cast his vote in Kodangal from where he is contesting.

Other top leaders like BJP State chief G. Kishan Reddy, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, and Minister for IT K.T. Rama Rao among others voted in the city.

Film stars and other celebrities have also exercised their franchise since morning at various polling booths in the city.

Clash among workers

Tension prevailed in several places across North Telangana where the BRS and Congress workers clashed with each other levelling accusations of money distribution or illegal entry into the polling booths.

Minister Indrakaran Reddy entered the polling booth with the BRS party scarf and a complaint was lodged.

Huzurnagar MLA Saidi Reddy picked up an argument with the Circle Inspector in the constituency when he objected to his entry into the booth wearing the party scarf.

The BRS and Congress cadres clashed in Jangaon and other constituencies in erstwhile Warangal district.

However, there was no major violence reported from anywhere in the State, with the police making tight security arrangements with the help of Central paramilitary forces and police personnel deployed from other States.

Top court quashes reappointment of Kannur varsity V-C

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday quashed the reappointment of Gopinath Ravindran as Kannur University Vice-Chancellor.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, in a judgment, set aside a decision of the Kerala High Court which had upheld the validity of a November 23, 2021 notification reappointing Mr. Ravindran.

The judgment, authored by Justice J.B. Pardiwala for the Bench, accused the government of "unwarranted interference" in the reappointment and the resultant abdication/surrender of his statutory powers by the Chancellor/Governor.

The court said that though the November 2021 notification was issued in the Chancellor's name, "the decision stood vitiated by the unwarranted interference.

Justice Pardiwala read out in court a press release issued by Raj Bhavan saying that the Chief Minister and the Higher Education Minister had kickstarted the reappointment process.

"We have reached to the conclusion that although the notification reappointing the respondent No. 4 (Ravindran) to the post of Vice-Chancellor was issued by the Chancellor yet the decision stood vitiated by the influence of extraneous considerations or to put it in other words by the unwarranted intervention of the State government," the court concluded.

The court made it clear that it was the Chancellor who was conferred with the competence under the Kannur University Act, 1996 to appoint or reappoint a Vice-Chancellor.

"No other person can interfere with the functioning of the statutory authority and if any decision is taken by a statutory authority at the behest or on a suggestion of a person who has no statutory role to play, the same would be patently illegal," Justice Pardiwala wrote.

Gopinath Ravindran

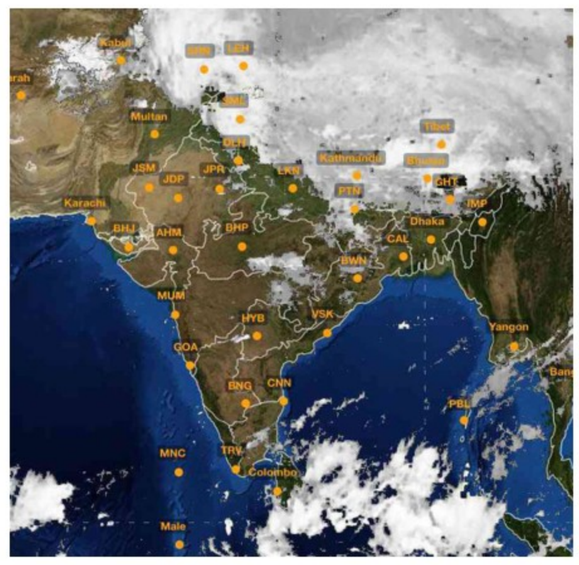
'I accept Supreme Court's decision'

KANNUR

Gopinath Ravindran said here on Thursday that he accepted the Supreme Court's decision to set aside his reappointment as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kannur. Speaking to the media, he said the reappointment was not made at his request and refuted the claim that it was made for political gains. He said with the Supreme Court cancelling the reappointment, there was no need for him to resign.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: YAHOO, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over coastal Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	29.0	19.0	Kozhikode	—	34.0	24.0
Ahmedabad	—	29.0	19.0	Kurnool	—	33.0	22.0
Aizawl	—	28.0	14.0	Lucknow	—	26.0	17.0
Allahabad	—	28.0	18.0	Madurai	—	32.0	24.0
Bengaluru	—	27.0	20.0	Mangaluru	—	35.0	25.0
Bhopal	—	27.0	18.0	Mumbai	—	32.0	24.0
Bhubaneswar	—	33.0	19.0	Mysuru	—	30.0	20.0
Chandigarh	—	23.0	14.0	New Delhi	—	25.0	16.0
Chennai	—	29.0	25.0	Patna	—	28.0	19.0
Coimbatore	—	30.0	23.0	Port Blair	—	30.0	27.0
Dehradun	—	24.0	13.0	Puducherry	—	29.0	24.0
Gangtok	—	21.0	9.0	Pune	—	33.0	18.0
Goa	—	33.0	26.0	Raipur	—	32.0	19.0
Guwahati	—	28.0	17.0	Ranchi	—	27.0	14.0
Hubballi	—	31.0	21.0	Shillong	—	23.0	12.0
Hyderabad	—	30.0	21.0	Shimla	—	15.0	6.0
Imphal	—	25.0	10.0	Srinagar	—	8.0	5.0
Jaipur	—	26.0	17.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	30.0	25.0
Kochi	—	33.0	25.0	Tiruchi	—	33.0	24.0
Kohima	—	23.0	11.0	Vijayawada	—	33.0	22.0
Kolkata	—	33.0	21.0	Visakhapatnam	—	32.0	21.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	—	43	20	85	99	
Bengaluru	8	31	48	42	71	
Chennai	14	54	45	50	48	
Delhi	18	98	63	458	436	
Hyderabad	10	20	43	59	73	
Kolkata	12	94	46	242	163	
Lucknow	7	75	70	282	216	
Mumbai	12	66	39	149	142	
Pune	128	204	111	108	83	
Visakhapatnam	—	—	42	—	—	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Delhi, recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 398 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 15

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF,
RURAL WORKS, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR
Letter No. , Dated : Email i.d. : crew_bbsr@yahoo.com

"e" Procurement Notice for bridge works in Odisha (Online-11(Bridge)/2024-23 dt.28.11.2023)

1. Name of the work : **"Construction of bridge work"**
2. Total No. of Works : **14** (Fourteen) nos
3. Estimated cost : **Rs.1057.03 to 4998.21 lakh**
4. Class of Contractor : **"A" Class, "Special" Class & "Super" Class as applicable.**
5. Period of Completion : **As mentioned in Column 7 of TCN**
6. Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of bridge works	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From	To
Chief Engineer, Buildings & Bridges, Rural Works,Odisha, Bhubaneswar	Online-11 (Bridge)/ 2023-24	14 (Fourteen) nos.	05.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M	20.12.2023 Upto 5.00 P.M

Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which will be available in website www.tendersorissa.gov.in .
Chief Engineer (Buildings & Bridges), Rural Works,Odisha, Bhubaneswar
O-1661: OIPR-25123/11/0034/2324

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Corrigendum-2 to E-Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/58/2023 Dated:09-08-2023

Name of work	Approx. Value
Construction of New Broad Guage Line Track between Hirekotangal (Excl.115500) and Mamadapur (Excl.155000) (39.5 Km.) under Ginigere (GIN)-Raichur (RC) New Line Project (165.57 Km.) including Signalling, Telecommunication & Electrical Works. **(Tender Ref. No: HIREKOTANGAL-MAMDAPUR-EPC)**	Rs. 7,52,19,45,242/-

Date of Closing

Existing	Revised
08-12-2023 (11:00 Hrs)	**15-03-2024 (11:00 Hrs)**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/Works Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/529/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24
South Western Railway - SWR | @SWRRLY | SWRRLY

Directorate of Ports & Inland Water Transport
Paribahan Bhawan (2nd Floor), A.G. Square, Unit-II, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 9.
Phone-0674-2390355, Fax-2396885, Email: - portsniwt.od@nic.in

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE - Bid Identification No. DPIWT-17/2023-24

1.	Name of work	Development of Ro-Pax Jetty and allied infrastructure connecting Balugaon in Khurda District and Krushnaprasad Gada in Puri District, Odisha under Sagarmala
2.	No. of works	1 (One) No
3.	No. of Covers	Double Cover
4.	Value of works	Rs.31.38 Crore
5.	Bid Cost	Rs.10,000.00
6.	Period of Completion	18 (Eighteen) Calendar Months
7.	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal.	06.12.2023 to 28.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.
8.	Date & Time of Pre-Bid meeting	13.12.2023 at 11.30 A.M.
9.	Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal	28.12.2023 upto 05.00 P.M.
10.	Date of opening of bid document (Cover-I)	29.12.2023 at 11.30 AM
11.	Date of transparent lottery process (If situation arises)	Intimation will be given through online
12.	Class of Contractor	"SPECIAL" & "SUPER" Class Contractor
13.	Name and address of Officer Inviting Tender (OIT)	Director, Ports & Inland Water Transport, Paribahan Bhawan (2nd Floor), A.G.Square, Unit-II, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pin-751009, Phone-0674-2390355, Fax-2396885, e-Mail- portsnitt.od@nic.in

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place, **https//tendersodisha.gov.in .** The Addendum / Corrigendum if any will be hosted in the website only.
Director, Ports & IWT, Odisha
JJ-42: OIPR-38035/11/0026/2324

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE No. 45/MYS/2023 of 24-11-2023
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Item of work	Approx. Value
1	**Sub Work I-A:** Krishnarajanagar:- Provision of Additional Running Line: Earthwork. **Sub Work I-B**: Krishnarajanagar:- Provision of Additional Running Line: Construction of Retaining wall. **Sub Work I-C**:-Krishnarajanagar:- Provision of Additional Running Line: Construction of drain. **Sub Work I-D**:-Krishnarajanagar:- Provision of Additional Running Line: Provision of IRS Platform shelter per bay 3 bays (16x7m wide). **Sub Work II**:- Krishnarajanagar:-Extension and raising of PF 1 & 2 & 3 to accommodate 24+1 ICF coaches and Provision of drinking cistern with 4 water taps 2 No for PF.No.1 and PF No.2. **Sub Work III**:- Ashokapuram:Provision of full length IRS Platform shelter on PF No.4 & 5 (20 bays). **Sub Work IV**:- Ashokapuram: Provision of 530 metre length and 5.5 metre wide high level platform Road 7 (PF No.6). **Sub Work V**:- Ashokapuram: Provision of full length Platform shelter over platform No.6.	Rs. 10,27,80,258/-
2	**Krishnaraja Nagar:** Provision of Additional Running Line in Mysuru- Hassan Line. **Sub Work- I**:- Linking of Track. **Sub Work-II**:- Welding of Rails. **Sub Work-III**:- Supply of Ballast	Rs. 95,94,253/-
3	**Sub Work-I:-** Bajakere-Provision of High Level platform for 250 meters, Platform shelter and other amenities at PF 1 **Sub Work-II**:-Kodimbala-Provision of High Level platform for 250 meters, Platform shelter and other amenities at PF 1. **Sub Work-III**:- Kaniyoor - Provision of High Level platform for 250 meters, Platform shelter and other amenities at PF1.**Sub Work-IV**:-Narimogaru-Provision of High Level platform for 250 meters, Platform shelter and other amenities at PF 1 and PF 2. **Sub Work-V**:- Yedamangala - Provision of High Level platform for 250 meters, Platform shelter and other amenities at PF 1 and PF 2.	Rs. 4,42,14,367/-
4	Hassan-Mangaluru Jn Section: Rehabilitation/Repairs of Bridge No. 419 (2 x 1.22m- RCC Pipe) at Km.114/200-300 between Yedamangala and Narimogaru Stations.	Rs. 99,99,965/-

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 18-12-2023
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Engineer / Co-Ordination Mysuru
PUB/531/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24
South Western Railway - SWR | @SWRRLY | SWRRLY

Odisha Police
Office of the D.G & I.G. of Police, Odisha, Cuttack
Bid No. GEM/2023/B/4252047

Online Bid through GeM Portal **https://gem.gov.in** vide Bid No. GEM/2023/B/4252047 is invited from the eligible bidders for purchase of Artificial Intelligence Search CCTNS for Odisha Police (SCRB) during the current financial year 2023-24 as per the particulars mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Name of Item	Approximate quantity
1.	Artificial Intelligence Search C C T N S for Odisha Police	1

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date & Time	
1.	Date & Time of publish of bid	28.11.2023	
2.	Date & time for submission of queries by E-Mail id:-	07.12.2023 by 05 PM	
3.	Date & Time of Pre Bid meeting	The Prospective bidders are requested to submit their queries relating to the tender/bid of the AI through Mail ID - aig-prov.odpol@gov.in by 07.12.2023 by 05.00 PM in this connection a pre-bid technical committee will be held on 11.12.23 at 12.00 Noon in virtual mode and the link will be sent through mail for the meeting	
4.	Date & Time of online bid Submission	Start Date & Time: 28.11.2023	End date & Time: 19.12.2023, 3.00 PM

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the GeM Bid No. GEM/2023/B/4252047 floated on GeM Portal. The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.
A.I.G. of Police (Provisioning,) Odisha, Cuttack.
(Tender Calling Authority)
D-171: OIPR-12029/11/0031/2324

EDUCATION HUB

A Business Initiative

International rounds of 18th LAWASIA International Moot Competition, 2023 held at Ramaiah College of Law, Bengaluru

The inaugural ceremony with the Bar Association of India took place at Dwaraka Auditorium, Ramaiah Campus, Bengaluru. The ceremony witnessed the august presence of Dr. M.R. Jayaram, Hon'ble Chairman, Gokula Education Foundation (GEF); Mr. Raphael Tay, Chair, LAWASIA Moot Standing Committee; Mr. Isomi Suzuki, Former President of LAWASIA; Mr. West Nareth Hib, Representative from LAWASIA Moot Judges; Shri. M.R. Anandaram, Director, Ramaiah College of Law; Shri. B.S. Ramaprasad, Chief Executive, GEF; Shri. G. Ramachandra, Chief Finance Officer, GEF; Prof. Umamahesh Sathyanarayan, Principal, RCL. The delegates addressed the gathering on the significane of law and justice, commending Ramaiah for hosting the event. Seven qualifying teams, including participants from NLU Jodhpur, and Singapore Management University, Singapore, were set to compete in the international rounds of the event. The four-day-long competition featured various sessions, culminating in the determination of the winning team on final day, following multiple intense and competitive rounds. Since its inception in 2005, the Competition has grown, currently spanning across 60 law schools from 30 different jurisdictions, including Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, China, Australia to name a few.

BGS Founder's Day program organized by the BGS Group of Institutions

Adi Chunchanagiri Sri Nirmalanandanath Swamiji speaking on the Founders Day programme said that if we combine simplicity and decency with hard work and determination, then success will be ours. Yash Varanat, Actor who is moving along with art and national culture, on the path of great achievement like Raj Kumar said a person who maintains simplicity and courtesy before and after success will rise to the top of fame. He said the memory of meeting Balagangadharnath Mahaswamiji as a child is still vivid.Appreciating BGS he also said to focus on the goal, to not value neighbours disrespect and keep in touch with those who will support their honesh goal. Vidhan Parishad member N. Govindaraju said that sports should be given the same importance as education and said that sports will play an important role in the development of the country along with improving our mental and physical health. At the same time, two professors, Savita Suvarna and Dr. Shantha-kumar Sevaratna, who have served in the BGS institution, were honoured with the award. MD of BGS and SJB Group of Companies Sri Prakashnath Swamiji MLA ST Somasekhar and others were present.

Ambitus World School to open campus in Bengaluru next year

Futuristic Edu Initiatives, founded in 2008 with a single school and 253 students, today operates four schools – Ambitus, The Creek, Seeds, and Ambitus Kinder World – in Hyderabad, Vijayawada, and Bengaluru, and has transformed the education landscape with many progressive concepts.
Ambitus World School in Hyderabad, located on a sprawling 7.5-acre campus, serves 800 students, while Ambitus Vijayawada accommodates 700 students on its six-acre campus. It will begin operating from a five-acre campus in Electronics City from the 2024-25 academic session.
The school has the Cambridge and Central Board of Secondary Education, and emphasizes not only traditional academic subjects but also the development of skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and digital literacy.
Ambitus's teaching and assessment approach goes beyond identifying students' positions in their learning journey. It emphasizes evaluating teaching effectiveness and adapting it to meet students' needs at various stages.
Students get hands-on learning experiences to enhance problem-solving and collaboration skills. The co-scholastic programme includes clubs, intra-school competitions, and projects, fostering leadership and personal growth.
Ambitus's infrastructure supports digital learning with smartboards and other devices, complemented by facilities like a swimming pool and sports fields, providing a comprehensive co-scholastic programme.

Delegates from Uzbekistan Visits Acharya Institute of Technology

Government delegates led by the Governor of Bukhara, Republic of Uzbekistan visited Acharya Institute of Technology and were serenaded with cultural performances at the campus. The meeting was held to initiate collaborative opportunities in the areas of Education and in the area of Information Technology to facilitate partnership with Indian and Uzbek startups and also attract Indian startups to explore the opportunities available in Bukhara Uzbekistan. The delegation included Zaripov Botir Komilovich, Governor of Bukhara, Asadov Rizo Raupovich, Deputy Governor of Bukhara, Yakhshiev Alijon Akhrorovich, Head of Ministry of Digital Technologies, Bukhara Region, and Safarov Sobir, Head of IT Park, Bukhara.

A lot at stake

India's reputation as a principled power is at stake after the indictment

The impact of the 15-page indictment filed by the U.S. Department of Justice against an Indian national, believed to be directed by an Indian government official for attempting an assassination plot against U.S.-based Khalistani separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, is likely to be felt in more than just the U.S. and India. The indictment is based on details of communications between the accused, an illicit drugs and arms dealer, Nikhil Gupta, with a serving senior Indian government intelligence officer, who is identified but unnamed, as well as with two men in the U.S., who were allegedly engaged to kill Mr. Pannun. The twist in the tale, unreported on so far in the U.S., or Canada, is that the two U.S.-based men were working for U.S. law enforcement, making it clear that American agents have been following the investigation since at least May. There have been meetings between the U.S. President Joseph Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi – other senior officials have met too – since then. The allegations raise troubling questions about how much was shared between the two countries, and whether the Modi government, which had been outraged by similar allegations made by Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau, has been less than honest about what it knows. If the government had knowingly authorised the targeting of Sikh separatists who are on India's UAPA terrorist designation list, then that implies a dramatic change in Indian policy, which it should be more upfront about. If top officials had no inkling about the "plots", and as the Ministry of External Affairs has stated this is not "government policy", it is also a matter of grave incompetence and 'rogue' officers. If, however, the U.S.'s and Canada's allegations are unfounded, and Indian officials are not linked to the plots, then the government needs to furnish evidence. In any case, the management of public messaging in the matter, especially India's reaction to Canada versus the U.S., appears inconsistent.

Whatever the factors behind the government's responses thus far, it is significant that it has now instituted a high-level inquiry committee to look into the U.S.'s allegations. Much hinges on its outcome. To begin with, India's U.S. ties could be impacted by what transpires, as White House expects India's full cooperation. India too, must ask the U.S., which is rightly placing such emphasis on the plot, why it is not keen on extraditing to India a man facing terror charges. Second, the U.S. and Canadian allegations will directly impact India's ties with all "Five Eyes" intelligence partner countries, which must not be overshadowed by this one case. Finally, it is India's reputation as a consistent and credible power – one which has earned respect worldwide for its sagacity and principled approach on such issues in the past – that hangs in the balance, and New Delhi must judge its next steps in the case extremely wisely.

Changing tide

The Tatmadaw has been stretched thin in the civil war in Myanmar

There seems to be a rejuvenation in the hopes for a return to democracy in Myanmar if recent events in the civil war are anything to go by. The Tatmadaw (the junta) has never had a bigger challenge until now since its February 2021 coup that ousted the National League for Democracy-led government. The violence now and reverses suffered by the ruling junta point to a new phase in the war. Ever since the launch of coordinated attacks by the Three Brotherhood Alliance (TBA) in late October, the junta has lost scores of bases and is being stretched thin as its forces have to battle opposition militias, especially in rural areas of the country. The junta sought to overcome the protests following the coup with crackdowns besides detaining NLD leaders in its attempt to reverse the changes in Myanmar's polity since its controlled democratisation in 2010. But this has only led to the NLD and its allies, which formed a National Unity Government (NUG) in exile, creating rebel militias called the Peoples' Defense Forces, who along with Karen, Kachin, Chin and Karenni ethnic forces took on the junta even as their political representatives engaged in a dialogue platform for Myanmar's federal and democratic charter.

The groups within the TBA – the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Arakan Army – besides others had initially retained their ceasefire status with the junta, but have now joined the civil war, weakening the junta's hold in the northern Shan State and engaging in hostilities in Rakhine State. This, combined with renewed attacks by other NUG allied ethnic armed forces, such as in Chin State neighbouring India, has put the junta in a bind. Most international actors have condemned the coup but have stopped short of outrightly supporting the NUG, except for the European Parliament which has recognised it as the legitimate government of Myanmar. While India has supported democratic reforms, it has cautiously cultivated ties with the junta, as it seeks to counter China's influence in Myanmar. These ties seem to have played a role in New Delhi's allowing the junta's soldiers fleeing the violence in Chin State into Mizoram and facilitating their return through the Moreh border. But with the junta reverting to its tyrannical ways of bombing civilian targets in its efforts to negate the growing resistance even as the NUG has gained greater legitimacy, and heralding better prospects for a truly federal, democratic Myanmar, it is time New Delhi reviewed its ties to the junta.

Making this Israeli-Palestinian war the last

Chinmaya R. Gharekhan

served as India's Ambassador to the United Nations and as India's Special Envoy to the Middle East, 2005-09

Karl F. Inderfurth

served as the United States Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Security Council and was Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, 1997-2001

All wars end. The Israeli-Hamas war will also end. When and how are still to be determined. But doing so is urgent.

The United Nations says 1.3 million of the 2.3 million residents of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip have been displaced, and almost half of all homes in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed.

One outcome of a war is when both sides gain something of value to them. The Israeli-Hamas war is likely to end in that kind of scenario.

Israel will win in military terms, no doubt about that. But Hamas is likely to win in terms of a greatly increased following among Arab populations everywhere, including, especially, in the occupied West Bank.

The Palestine Authority, which has been ruling there for the past 30 years, has become vastly unpopular and corrupt. Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, the most moderate Palestine leader Israel could have ever hoped for, has failed singularly in making any progress towards the objective of establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank. He is perceived as collaborating with Israel in its hunt for 'terrorists'. The peace process has long been dead.

'Right of self-defence' and the reality

As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has reminded the international community, the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, condemnable and despicable as it was, did not happen in a vacuum. Under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, Israel has the inherent right of self-defence. The same article lays down that after acting in self-defence, the state concerned must report the action taken by it to the UN Security Council (UNSC). This does not seem to have been done.

In any case, self-defence does not authorise the disproportionate or indiscriminate use of force against civilians. It has been reported that Gaza's rate of death during Israel's assault has few precedents in this century – almost 15,000, a majority of them women and children. This goes well beyond the prevailing customary law of self-defence.

> The only lasting solution is for Israel to vacate its occupation of the West Bank and let a viable Palestinian state emerge

The most important and troubling issue is: what happens when Hamas has been subdued? What takes its place? Some, including the U.S. President Joe Biden, have suggested that the Ramallah-based Palestine Authority should take over administering the Gaza Strip, once the situation becomes ready for that. 'The rich Arab states', a phrase widely cited in the media, would be asked to finance the rebuilding of Gaza. The only problem is that the Palestinians, in Gaza as well as in West Bank, do not want the Palestine Authority led by Mr. Abbas to rule anywhere, let alone Gaza.

The only available option is to hold fresh elections, in Gaza as well as in the West Bank, under international supervision as and when the situation allows. The UN should be asked to deploy a peace-keeping contingent on the border between Gaza and Israel to ensure security for both. The suffocating blockade of Gaza would be lifted. Israel does not like the UN, and likes the UN Secretary-General even less. It should be remembered that it was the UN that gave birth and legitimacy to the insipient state of Israel. The U.S. will need to take the lead on this in the UNSC.

Feasibility of two-state solution

Meanwhile, the proposal for a two-state solution, long pushed aside, has come alive. Everyone seems to be repeating the two-state mantra.

But how feasible is the two-state concept today?

The 1993 Oslo Accord envisaged Palestine to be based in the West Bank. Today, the West Bank is heavily populated by Israeli settlers, 4,50,000 at latest count. No Israeli government will succeed in persuading the settlers to return. Force would be required. The land is like Swiss cheese, having settler roads and innumerable settlements, with more planned. The current Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, will never agree to a Palestinian state, however truncated.

What is needed, as soon as conditions permit, is to have a reality check of the two-state proposal – what is feasible and what is not. Painful concessions will be required, including land swaps, and a monitoring mechanism established to hold each side to the commitments they make.

The only lasting solution is for Israel to vacate its occupation of the West Bank and let a viable Palestinian state emerge.

Abraham Accords are a foundation

To ensure Israel's legitimate concern for the safety of its people, the new state should be demilitarised. Other measures can be thought of to assure the Israelis of their safety. Israel's neighbouring Arab states should all be engaged in this process. The Abraham Accords provide a foundation.

If Israel has the vision of living in harmony in the region with its Arab neighbours, this is the only way. When that happens, Iran will lose its proclaimed reason for its anti-Israel tirades; Hezbollah will, likewise, lose its most important plank for threatening Israel.

For decades, Israeli-Palestinian relations have been locked in a never-ending cycle of death, destruction and misery. The war in Gaza is the latest iteration. It should be the last. The Middle East could, finally, enjoy stable peace and security.

Broadcast regulation 3.0, commissions and omissions

Vibodh Parthasarathi

teaches media policy at the Centre for Culture, Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

The Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill released in November by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) is part of an arc of endeavours to regulate broadcasting in an integrated manner. The last initiative to take on this ambitious task was back in 2007, in the form of the Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill. Ten years before that, when cable and satellite broadcasting was in its infancy, the Broadcasting Bill of 1997 scripted the first effort to visualise an integrated regulatory framework for this sector. The recent third rendition of a Broadcasting Bill comes on the heels of a pre-consultation paper on 'National Broadcasting Policy' by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), a document initiated following a reference from the MIB.

What it seeks to do and concerns

There appear to be three positive propositions in the current Bill, albeit each requiring crucial refinements. First, it obliges broadcasting network operators and broadcasters to maintain records of subscriber data, and subject this to periodic external audits, as is the international norm. Second, the Bill seeks to stipulate a methodology for audience measurement, and the sale of ratings data. Both mechanisms will bring the much-needed transparency in the opaque value chain of the cable and satellite television business in our country. That said, the Bill completely lacks any guardrails to shield the privacy of subscribers and audiences in such practices of data collection. Third, the provision to permit private actors in terrestrial broadcasting will encourage competition to Doordarshan, the state broadcaster, as is in many G-20 countries. Back in 2016, TRAI had initiated consultations on this. At that time, there was an opinion about terrestrial broadcasting proving viable only for large players, including those already in cable and satellite broadcasting; consequently, such a move, it could be argued, is likely to diminish the diversity of suppliers in broadcasting as a whole. This anxiety can be pacified if the Bill allows terrestrial broadcasting to those not involved in other forms of broadcasting.

Apart from these potentially positive provisions, there are numerous apprehensions that arise from the Broadcasting Bill's manifest scope as well as its noteworthy silences.

> The Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill must not lose the opportunity to protect press freedom and diversity

A major concern is the Bill including Over-the-Top (OTT) content suppliers in the definition of broadcasting services – as also proposed in TRAI's 'National Broadcasting Policy'.

Intriguingly, both moves come amidst intense discussions catalysed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITy) (hitherto mandated to deal with the online media) on licensing OTT players. Now, the MIB appears to poach on MEITy's jurisdiction – a territorial slugfest typical in countries with a fragmented regulatory architecture. For the news media and their audience, there is a different concern. The Bill's expanded definition of broadcasting constricts the conditions in which journalists and news outlets that are not a part of large, multi-lingual television networks can continue their professional pursuits.

While it is fruitful for a news outlet to have an oversight body, warranting a 'Content Evaluation Committee' takes the Bill in a questionable direction: mandating an internal body to self-certify news programming. The issue is not only of feasibility and costs but also of desirability. Since the role of an internal oversight mechanism is to maintain the accuracy of news and quality of journalism, its design is best left to individual news outlets. They could decide whether to design this along the lines of an ombudsperson, as some newspapers attempted in the past, or akin to a 'Readers' Editor', as practised by few online news outlets.

On ownership and a regulator

Now, the two crucial silences in the Bill. Like the TRAI paper, the Bill is mum on issues of ownership. While the Bill is keen to stipulate a methodology for audience measurement, there is no desire to measure the extent of cross-media and vertical ownership. Both these forms of media power thwart the diversity of suppliers, and perhaps, consequently, that of viewpoints, in the marketplace of news. In fact, just last year, TRAI itself had drawn attention to extensive cross-media ownership between newspapers and news broadcasters through indirectly owned affiliates, and the need to evolve a system to capture this.

Amusingly, one such news outlet with cross-media interests was apprehensive about inroads by telecom companies into broadcasting. They rightly feel such inroads add another dimension to vertical integration, since some cable and DTH distributors also own, in a roundabout manner, news broadcasters. Both renditions of vertical integration risk the ability of the audience to access, avail, and/or afford news from a diverse range of suppliers.

The Bill is equally silent on creating an independent broadcast regulator, as hinted in TRAI's paper. This was first mooted in the 'airwaves' judgment of 1995, subsequently in the 1997 Broadcasting Bill, and reiterated in the 2007 iteration of the Bill. Instead, this Bill plans a 'Broadcast Advisory Council' to examine viewers' grievances and violations of the Programme Code and Advertisement Code. This raises two concerns: first, the capacity of such a Council to track and address grievances, genuine or motivated, raised by over 800 million TV viewers; and second, the lack of autonomy accorded to this body, since the Bill empowers the Central government to ultimately decide on the Council's advice.

Leeway to the government

In addition, the Bill empowers the government to inspect broadcasters without intimating them in advance, and to impound their equipment, presumably including those issued to their employees.

Furthermore, violations of the Programme Code and Advertisement Code attract deleting or modifying content, in addition to existing measures such as ceasing transmissions for particular durations. Finally, the Bill grants tremendous leeway to government to curtail broadcasting and its distribution in "public interest", a term that is distressingly left undefined. All these intrusive mechanisms augment the vulnerabilities of professional news suppliers to external pressure groups. This should worry those who will deliberate over legislating the Bill, irrespective of which benches they occupy in Parliament.

As the latest extension of the arc of endeavours to devise an integrated regulatory framework for broadcasting, this Bill must not lose the opportunity to protect press freedom and diversity. To do so, it has to will its way to incorporate some startling omissions, review its intrusive commissions, and fine-tune potentially positive provisions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

U.S. allegation, Indian plot

If India is found to have connections with plans to exterminate targets abroad, it does not augur well for the country's established reputation for respecting the sovereignty of other nations and upholding the rule of law (Page 1, November 30). However, it is laughable that the United States, notorious for carrying out extrajudicial killings in foreign territories, is now advising India on the importance of respecting the sovereignty of other nations, as its own interests are at stake. This situation only underscores the shaky nature of U.S. foreign policy, which was famously remarked by Henry Kissinger, who passed away on November 29: "America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests."

Michael Jom,
Thiruvananthapuram

The exposé is so elaborate that one is convinced of its authenticity. It calls for a thorough investigation by India which must act quickly to stop any damage to the country's name and reputation.

K. Nehru Patnaik,
Visakhapatnam

This indictment by the U.S. Department of Justice in public, with the sharing of specific inputs, is very serious. In contrast to India's dismissive response to Canada's allegations on similar lines, New Delhi's swift move to set up a high-level committee to investigate the U.S.'s allegations indicates there is something fishy. India needs to clear the air as its reputation is at stake.

D. Sethuraman,
Chennai

A long-time reader of *The Hindu* like me does not understand why it has given importance to such a report. It is well known that American agencies engage in similar 'plots' to eliminate political rivals all over the world. As such, the U.S. has no *locus standi* to blame an Indian official.

A. Balagangadharan,
Pollachi, Tamil Nadu

When the U.S. wants someone it has labelled a 'terrorist', it does not think twice about breaching geographical boundaries to go after the person. But when it comes to a country such as India, which is again a victim of terrorism, it seems different sets of rules are applicable. At this juncture, it is not clear what the U.S. wants to achieve by this open blame game. There must be some kind of universal jurisdiction to hand over the terrorists to countries based on evidence about the extent of their involvement in terror activities.

A. Venkatasubramanian,
Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

Henry Kissinger

The passing of Henry Kissinger marks the end of an era. Both he and President Nixon had an uneasy relationship with India during the refugee influx from then East Pakistan, when the American establishment clearly leaned towards Pakistan. The India-Soviet Accord also led to American suspicion. In his book, *White House Years*, Kissinger would describe the meeting between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and President Nixon and go on to say that the meeting failed not because the two leaders did not understand each other, but because they understood each other too well!

Angara Venkata Girija Kumar,
Chennai

Storm water drains

On a three-day trip to Chennai, I found that most arterial roads are not designed to drain water from even short spells of rain for an hour or less of the order of 5 cm. Well designed wide drains are a must. The City Corporation should study the storm water management in public sector townships such as NLC and BHEL-Ranipet, Tiruchi.

A.V. Narayanan,
Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

Is the emerging global order bipolar?

Major General B.K. Sharma

is Director General of the United Service Institution of India

Swaran Singh

is Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

PARLEY

The world has witnessed several disruptions in recent years. China's phenomenal rise has unleashed a superpower competition between Washington and Beijing. Russia is challenging the post-World War security architecture in Europe through military means. In West Asia, Israel is engaged in a brutal war with Hamas. The world is also witnessing the rise of several middle powers such as India. Is the emerging global order bipolar? B.K. Sharma and Swaran Singh discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **Stanly Johny.** Edited excerpts:

Some say that the global order today is economically multipolar, but militarily unipolar. Some say there is multipolarity, while some others argue that we are back to bipolar rivalry between the U.S. and China. What is your take on the emerging global order?

B.K. Sharma: Everything is in a state of flux. I would look at the present world order as one of asymmetric bipolarity in which the U.S. still remains a pre-eminent power, but China is closing in very fast. Meanwhile, there are other power centres emerging and they will play a significant role in the balance of power. I'd say an asymmetric, diffused world order is taking shape. With the passage of time, maybe these contours will be clearer.

Professor, let's look at China, which has seen a phenomenal rise economically and militarily over the past four decades. How is China's rise affecting the global order?

Swaran Singh: In the last 40 years, if you have to identify a single factor influencing international order, China stands out. Its GDP in 1990 [was] $300 billion, [moved] to $1 trillion-plus at the turn of century and is now $19.3 trillion. That is an unprecedented event or process to take place in human history. And the fact that China is controlled by one party and virtually one man makes this economic lever particularly powerful in redefining the order.

But let me also mention here that power has been the defining feature of how world orders have been built and destroyed over the years, and this power has often been military at its core. And if you use that yardstick, you will see that in the 19th century, countries that developed steam engines and developed naval fleets, [that is] small European countries, became great powers. In the 20th century, we had nuclear evolution, so we devised a new concept called superpowers. Great powers could control multiple events around the world and superpowers could control multiple events around the world simultaneously.

U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President President Xi Jinping meet in Woodside, California, on the sidelines of APEC. NEW YORK TIMES

The 21st century is one of people's power. The connectivity that the world sees today is unprecedented. That results in interactions, sometimes even interdependence, to some extent global integration, and therefore there could be bipolar impulses.

But they [China] are never likely to produce a rigid bipolar world because the world is much more interdependent and integrated now.

General, you are now in Moscow attending the Primakov Forum. The war in Ukraine has been going on for the past 20 months. Do you think the war has driven Russia deeper into China's embrace? What are the implications for India?

BKS: Before 2014 (when economic sanctions were imposed on Russia), the Russians were extremely circumspect about having close ties with China because of their memories of the Cold War during which the Chinese had sided with the U.S. But with the imposition of economic sanctions, Russia was not left with many choices and gravitated towards China. Then the invasion of Ukraine took place and a second set of economic sanctions was imposed on Russia. But let me tell you, the Russians are extremely conscious of the fact that they cannot put all their eggs in one basket. There are still simmering undercurrents of mistrust between the two sides, particularly regarding the balance of power in Central Asia. The relationship looks cosy from the outside now, but deep down, there are misgivings on both sides. Therefore, Russia would not like to go the whole hog into the Chinese orbit.

There are enough signals from Russia that in pursuance of its policy, or pivot to Asia, it would like to diversify its relationship, particularly in terms of energy, with the developing economies of Asia, especially East Asia and India. The Russians are seriously looking at reinventing their ties with India. There are two important corridors which will give some gravitas to the relationship. One is the International North-South Transport Trade Corridor and the other is the Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor. Once we are able to make these corridors operational, Russia's dependence on China will probably reduce. And this is the direction in which we should be.

> I don't see the competition between China and the U.S., and Russia and the U.S., heating up to the extent that India's options get closed completely because these countries are enormously dependent on each other. So, I don't see a rigid bipolar system happening in the future.
>
> SWARAN SINGH

Professor, India has very good ties with both the U.S. and Russia. But at the same time, it has a testy relationship with China. If the great power competition heats up between China and the U.S., and between Russia and the U.S., do you think India's options will shrink further?

SS: There is often a temptation to view India's relations with the U.S. and China in contrasting terms, which makes it easier to highlight the differences. But all is not hunky dory [with the U.S.]. India and the U.S. had signed a joint statement in July 2005, which opened up a new relationship and a nuclear deal was finally signed in 2008. And India was supposed to get six nuclear power reactors from the U.S. These have not come yet. So, it's not that everything is fantastic. On the other hand, China's has a trade of $138 billion with India, so it's not that in China's case we only have difficulties. With both countries, relations are complex because India, just like China and the U.S., is a major global player. Indeed, if the competition between China and the U.S., and Russia and the U.S., heats up, it does reduce the manoeuvrability of India in terms of how to manage good relations with Russia, China, and the U.S. At the same time, I don't see those heating up to the extent that our options get closed completely because these countries are enormously dependent on each other. So, I don't see a rigid bipolar system happening in the future.

General, what in your view should be India's strategic approach towards a rising China?

BKS: First, we have to acknowledge the fact that China is going to be a long-term competitor in Asia. And the border is just one of the pressure points that China uses against India. In the foreseeable future, I do not visualise any major breakthrough on the border aspect. We also have to recognise that there is a huge power asymmetry between India and China. And with time, this will remain, if not grow. Therefore, fundamental to India's dealing with China is the growth of our own comprehensive national power. India is going to be the third largest economy perhaps in a decade or more. With that economic clout, India has to spend more on military modernisation, with the added focus on disruptive technologies.

The second issue is about internal balancing. We have fault lines. Rather than mending those, those fault lines get accentuated because of political calculations. Societal cohesiveness is important. [We need to] particularly bring about peace and tranquility in the border States.

Then, as part of our external balancing, I think we need to balance our relations with the U.S. so that in some form we are able to perpetuate China's two-front dilemma: the Western Pacific on one hand and the Line of Actual Control on the other.

Professor, we have a war in Eastern Europe and one in West Asia. In Eastern Europe, the U.S. is supporting Ukraine against Russia, and in West Asia, it is supporting Israel in its attack on Gaza. How do you look at the global security situation?

SS: These wars have become televised now and the world is far more aware of what is happening. But if you look at the last 100 years of inter-state wars, most of them ended up in fatigue. Some of that is happening in the case of Ukraine. [U.S. President Joe] Biden's support to Israel is partly driven by the fact that Republicans stand by Israel. So, there are political compulsions that make leaders do that. I think the deeper point here is the military-industrial complex. Industries are producing destructive weapons all the time, and they're spreading their instruments of death and destruction around the world. That is a deeper question that needs to be addressed. So, violence is going to be widespread because there is a huge military-industrial complex behind it.

To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

Between hope and despair

Reporting on the tunnel rescue, though challenging, was finally fulfilling

Ishita Mishra

On the day of Deepavali, when 41 workers got trapped inside the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel, no one imagined that evacuation would turn out to be a long-drawn and challenging exercise spanning 17 days.

I had been assigned to go to Rajasthan on November 15 to cover the Assembly elections. My colleague, Aroon Deep, rushed to Silkyara where the workers had already spent over 72 hours inside the tunnel. He spent five days at the site covering the efforts of the various agencies. When a personal emergency brought Aroon back to Delhi, I was asked to go to Uttarakhand on November 22. That morning, the air was thick with anticipation as an American auger machine had penetrated up to over 40 metres into the debris. Since there had been progress, I expected to return to Delhi the next day. But by evening, the machine got stuck in the debris. It became clear that I would have to spend more time in the mountains.

The first problem was accommodation. The mountain was teeming with people and all the hotels had been booked by bureaucrats, government officials, members of the rescue team, and journalists. An old journalist friend shared the contact of a villager who had a room available in his double-storey house, barely 200 m from the tunnel. I took the offer happily only to realise when I walked in that it had three windows without panes. It was 3°C at night.

The next day, emotions ran high. The rescue teams had declared that the workers would be out soon. However, the smiling faces soon turned crestfallen as the machine, firmly wedged inside the debris, could not be dislodged.

For reporters, the challenge was to provide constant updates, especially when nothing happened for hours sometimes. And when details were provided, they had to be fact-checked, simplified and reported. We had to run from the tunnel site to a corner of the mountain to send updates as Internet was patchy in the hills. There was no Internet in my room either.

The other challenge was food. Most restaurants were shut since the Char Dham Yatra had concluded, so we mostly survived on Maggi and biscuits. Some NGOs served hot food but this either got polished off quickly or turned too cold to eat by the time we got to it. But people are always kind and one restaurant owner, Deepender Rawat, immediately opened his outlet seeing the rush of people in Silkyara.

The family members of the workers were naturally anxious and kept waiting outside the tunnel. While we print reporters sometimes mocked TV reporters for thrusting mics into the face of anyone emerging from the tunnel, whether an electrician or cook, we also felt sorry for them. The 24X7 news cycle is so punishing that the reporters had no time to wash their clothes or eat. One day, I heard a female reporter asking her brother to come to Silkyara from Delhi with some clothes as she had nothing left to wear. The TV journalists also did not wear caps though they were shivering; they reasoned that they had to look presentable on camera.

When vertical drilling began from the top of the mountain, there was cautious hope once again. Later, a senior bureaucrat called a press conference at the tunnel and informed us that the rescue would take some time as rat-hole miners had been called to manually dig through the debris. The families of the workers had tears in their eyes.

I decided to return to Delhi for a day. No one expected the miners to do wonders. But soon after reaching Delhi, I was told that progress had been steady, and the operation was in its final leg. I left again for Silkyara, typing stories on my phone throughout my journey.

Cheers erupted when the workers came out. It was 2 a.m. when our day ended, but no journalist was tired. Reporting on tragedies can often be draining and depressing, but this time we were thrilled that a long and difficult assignment had ended on a happy note and that the workers and their families were finally united.

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

The end of an ordeal

Israeli hostage Mia Leimberg, 17, and her pet dog Bella were released by Hamas fighters after a temporary ceasefire between Israel and Hamas came into effect. Mia's father Leimberg searched for the dog in the aftermath of the Hamas attack on October 7, hoping it would be a source of comfort for his daughter when she returned, Israeli daily Israel Hayom reported. It became clear only when Mia was released that Bella had been with her all along. They were handed over to the Red Cross in Rafah, Gaza. AFP

FROM THE ARCHIVES The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 1, 1973

RBI imposes fresh credit curbs

Bombay, Nov. 30: The Reserve Bank of India to-day announced further credit restraints and tightened its lending policy in a bid to limit the expansion of credit by scheduled commercial banks in the coming weeks. The measures announced to-day include raising of the minimum lending rate on advances from 10 to 11 per cent from to-morrow and the minimum assets that constitute the liquidity requirement from 30 to 32 per cent of the total demand and time liabilities from December 8. The minimum lending rate has been raised on all advances except in respect of the categories that are now exempted. The present minimum rate of 9 per cent on bill finance has also been fixed at 9.5 per cent. The measures announced to-day are a follow up of the current busy season credit policy announced by Reserve Bank Governor, Mr. S. Jagannathan, on November 16. Borrowings of scheduled commercial banks from the Reserve Bank will not ordinarily be allowed to exceed the amounts as specified under: (a) 1.5 per cent of a bank's total demand and time liabilities as of September 28, 1973 for the period between December 8, 1973 and January 11, 1974; (b) 2 per cent of a bank's total demand and time liabilities as on September 28, 1973 for the period between January 12 and April 5, 1974; and (c) One per cent of a bank's total demand and time liabilities as on September 28, 1973 for the period between April 6 and May 31, 1974.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 1, 1923

The Volstead Act

Leafield Oxford (Midnight), Nov. 30: The U.S. Government has sent an answer to the British Government about the constitutional point raised in the negotiations for the treaty designed to accommodate the requirements of the Volstead Prohibition Act with those of the 3 mile limit. Some safeguard was wanted on the British side against the possibility of the U.S. Supreme Court overruling the treaty. As the proposed treaty represents a compromise whereby the British Government would make exception in America's favour to the operation of the 3 mile limit and America would undertake to allow sealed liquor to enter and leave American ports, it would be difficult for the British Government to withdraw its own concession if and when American concession were made invalid by a test case taken before the Supreme Court.

From Page One

Hit job not our policy, says MEA on U.S. charges

News reports – that have not been denied in either Delhi or Washington yet – added that the information about the plot had been previously shared by U.S. President Joseph Biden and several other key U.S. officials with their Indian counterparts.

"We take such inputs seriously, and a high-level inquiry committee has been constituted to look into all the relevant aspects of the matter and necessary follow-up action will be taken based on the findings of the committee," Mr. Bagchi said.

However, the MEA did not respond to a specific question over whether the inquiry would now also include allegations by Canada, which had expelled a senior Indian diplomat over what it claimed was "credible evidence" against Indian government agents involved in the Nijjar killing.

According to the U.S. indictment, Mr. Gupta had initially tried to engage the services of the hitman – who was actually an undercover American agent – to carry out the Nijjar killing, suggesting that there were three other targets in Canada that the Indian government was seeking to eliminate, apart from Pannun in the U.S. However, on June 16, just two days before Nijjar was shot dead, Mr. Gupta indicated that a hitman had already been engaged for the purpose, it said.

The MEA spokesperson, however, said that India's real concern with Canada remained the presence of separatists in the country. "Insofar as Canada is concerned, they have consistently given space to anti-India extremists and violence. That is at the heart of the issue," Mr. Bagchi said, in response to a question by *The Hindu*, calling on Canada to follow the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. "We have also seen interference in our internal affairs. This is obviously unacceptable," he added.

GDP surges 7.6% in Q2, goes past RBI forecast

While growth is expected to moderate in the second half of the year, economists expect the strong first half numbers to lift the full year performance by 0.1% to 0.2% over current projections. The RBI and the government expect GDP to grow 6.5% this year.

Mr. Srivastava attributed the buoyant first half growth "largely" to government spends dominated by front-loaded capex.

Manufacturing GVA which had shrunk almost 4% in Q2 of last year when the overall GVA grew 5.4%, recorded the fastest uptick in nine quarters to rise 13.9% between July and September. Mining GVA also jumped 10%, thanks to favourable base effects from a contraction last year.

Construction GVA jumped 13.3% this Q2, while electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services added 10.1% over last year's performance, to lift the overall growth numbers, even as private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) tanked sequentially as well as year-on-year.

The share of PFCE, which indicates consumer spending, in the GDP was 56.8% in Q2, the NSO estimated, vis-a-vis 59.3% in the same quarter of 2022-23 and 57.3% in Q1 of this year.

₹2.23 lakh crore to buy 97 Tejas jets, 156 Prachand helicopters

Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, gives initial approval for acquisition of the indigenously developed aircraft for armed forces; 98% of total procurement to be sourced from domestic industries

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

In a major move to enhance the combat capabilities of the armed forces significantly, the Union government on Thursday accorded initial approval to defence acquisition projects estimated at ₹2.23 lakh crore that included procurement of 97 Tejas light combat aircraft and 156 Prachand combat helicopters.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, cleared the projects at a time India is locked in a military stand-off with China at a number of friction points in eastern Ladakh for over three years.

Military boost: The DAC also approved a proposal of the Indian Air Force to upgrade its Su-30 fighter fleet by HAL. FILE PHOTO

The Defence Ministry said 98% of the total procurement will be sourced from domestic industries and that the move will give a substantial boost to the Indian defence industry in achieving the goal of *aatmanirbharta* (self-reliance).

The DAC also approved a proposal of the Indian Air Force to upgrade its Su-30 fighter fleet by state-run aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. It further accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) or initial approval for procurement of two types of anti-tank munitions namely area denial munition (ADM) Type-2 and -3.

For the Navy

The top body on procurement of military hardware also cleared acquisition and integration of automatic target tracker (ATT) and digital basaltic computer (DBC) for T-90 tanks besides approving another proposal to buy medium-range anti-ship missiles (MRAShM) for the Navy.

The MRAShM is a lightweight surface-to-surface missile which will be a primary offensive weapon aboard various Indian naval ships.

"The DAC accorded AoNs for procurement of Light Combat Helicopter for Indian Air Force and Indian Army and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk-1A for IAF from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) under Buy (Indian-IDDM) category," the Ministry said.

Though it did not mention the specific numbers, official sources said 97 Tejas light combat aircraft (Mark 1A) are being procured for the IAF and 156 light combat helicopters (LCH) are being procured for the Army and the IAF.

In February 2021, the Defence Ministry sealed a ₹48,000-crore deal with the HAL for procurement of 83 Tejas MK-1A jets for the IAF. With the additional fleet, the number of Tejas aircraft being procured by the IAF would go up to 180.

India should pay heed to U.S. probe on Nijjar's death: Canada PM

Press Trust of India
OTTAWA

The indictment of an Indian national in a foiled assassination attempt against a Sikh separatist on American soil underscored what Canada has been alleging in Hardeep Singh Nijjar's case and India must take it seriously, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said.

Mr. Trudeau said on Wednesday that Canadian authorities had been working closely with their American counterparts since August on allegations about the Indian government's involvement in Nijjar's killing in British Columbia on June 18.

India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. New Delhi has rejected Mr. Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated".

The remarks by Mr. Trudeau came after Nikhil Gupta, 52, was charged with murder-for-hire in connection with his participation in a foiled plot to assassinate a U.S. citizen in New York City.

"The news coming out of the United States further underscores what we've been talking about from the very beginning, which is that India needs to take this seriously. The Indian government needs to work with us to ensure that we are getting to the bottom of this," *The Canadian Press* quoted Mr. Trudeau as saying.

The indictment in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York does not name the U.S. citizen who was the target of the assassination plot. However, *The Financial Times*, citing unnamed sources, last week reported that U.S. authorities thwarted a plot to assassinate banned Sikhs for Justice's Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, and issued a warning to the Indian government over concerns it was involved in the plot.

"This is not something that anyone can take lightly," Mr. Trudeau said.

Centre agrees to examine demands for Ladakh safeguards

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has agreed to examine the demand of civil society groups in Ladakh to provide "constitutional safeguards" for the Union Territory, said an order issued on Thursday.

Civil society organisations have been demanding Ladakh's inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and granting tribal status to the Union Territory.

The key detail is mentioned in an order issued by the Ministry to reconstitute a high-powered committee for Ladakh. The 22-member panel, chaired by Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, will have representatives from both Kargil and Leh divisions. The panel is expected to hold its first meeting in Delhi on December 4.

The terms of reference of the committee are to discuss measures to protect the region's unique culture and language taking into consideration its geographical location and strategic importance; to ensure protection of land and employment for people of Ladakh; to discuss measures for inclusive development and employment generation in the region, to discuss measures related to the empowerment of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill District Councils of Leh and Kargil; and to examine constitutional safeguards that could be provided to ensure the measures and protection detailed above.

Ladakh has erupted in protests several times since it was carved out of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019.

Chinese military values ties with Indian forces: official

Press Trust of India
BEIJING

China's Defence Ministry on Thursday said that its military values relations with its Indian counterpart, and the 20 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks had helped ease tensions amid the eastern Ladakh stand-off.

Indian and Chinese troops have been locked in confrontation for over three years at certain friction points in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides have completed a disengagement from several areas.

Border stable

The current situation at the India-China border remains generally stable, Senior Colonel Wu Qian, spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defence, said at a press conference here answering a question on the prolonged stand-off in eastern Ladakh.

Wu Qian

The two sides have maintained communications through diplomatic and military channels and have made steady progress in resolving the remaining issues in the Western sector, he said.

"China values the China-Indian military relationship. We hope the Indian side works with us to reach the same goal to build stronger strategic mutual trust, properly handle differences and safeguard peace and tranquillity along the borders," Senior Colonel Wu added.

Referring to the 20 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks held so far to resolve the stand-off, he said that the dialogue had become an important platform for border control as it resulted in disengagement in four areas including the Galwan Valley, Pangong Lake and Hot Springs.

The Indian side is pressing for a resolution of lingering issues in the Depsang and Demchok areas.

The last round of the Corps Commander-level talks was held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on November 9-10. He, however, was non-committal about the next round of talks.

The Anti-Submarine Warfare shallow water craft corvettes at Cochin Shipyard during their launch on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Three anti-submarine warfare ships for Indian Navy launched

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The first three of a series of eight anti-submarine warfare shallow water crafts being built by Cochin Shipyard Ltd. for the Navy were launched on the shipyard premises on Thursday.

The ships, to be named *INS Mahe*, *INS Malvan* and *INS Mangrol* upon commissioning, were launched in the presence of the Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice-Admiral Sanjay J. Singh; the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Forces Command, Vice-Admiral Suraj Berry; and the Commandant of the Indian Naval Academy, Vice-Admiral Puneet Bahl, by their spouses Anjali Bahl, Kangana Berry and Zarine Lord Singh, respectively.

The shipyard inked the contract with the Defence Ministry to build the eight vessels in 2019.

Comes as replacement

These Mahe class ships will replace the Navy's in-service Abhay class ASW corvettes and are designed for anti-submarine operations in the coastal waters, and low-intensity maritime, mine-laying and sub-surface surveillance operations. They are also capable of coordinated ASW operations with aircraft, and search and rescue. Each vessel can carry 57 personnel, including seven naval officers.

Navy gets ready for its biggest naval exercise amid ocean engagements

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

As the Indian Navy looks to mark Navy Day on December 4, it is also gearing up to host its largest multilateral exercise early next year. The next edition of "Exercise Milan" is scheduled for February 2024, and is expected to see the participation of over 50 countries, defence sources said while noting that this reflects the significant expansion of the Navy's engagements as well as capacity to assist countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as the first responder and Preferred Security Partner.

"Presence and operational reach by the Indian Navy through Mission Based Deployments and other operational engagements has steadily enhanced. There are 17 multilateral and 20 bilateral exercises that the Navy conducts annually which exemplifies India's commitment to maintaining strong defence ties," a defence source said.

"These exercises are crucial for honing operational capabilities, sharing best practices, building mutual trust, fostering interoperability, strengthening diplomatic ties, and enhancing maritime security. They not only demonstrate India's naval prowess but also contribute to the shared goal of ensuring a secure and stable maritime environment."

Combat ready: Naval aircraft firing flares during rehearsals for Navy Day off the coast of Visakhapatnam on Thursday. K. R. DEEPAK

Exercise Milan is a biennial multilateral naval exercise which began in 1995, and has since significantly expanded in scope and scale to become the largest exercise held by India. The mid-planning conference of Milan-24 was held in October. The last edition of Milan, which is held off Visakhapatnam, saw participation from over 40 countries.

In addition, since July 2022, the Indian Navy has joined the Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Force (CMF), a U.S.-led multinational naval partnership that aims to promote security, stability, and prosperity across international waters in IOR. "Indian naval ships and aircraft are being deployed for CMF-led operations on regular basis," sources noted and earlier this month India announced its decision to become a full member of the grouping.

This year, the Navy Day is will be held at the Sindhudurg Fort on the western seaboard, built in 1660 by Chhatrapati Shivaji. The operational demonstration will witness participation of 20 warships along with 40 aircraft such as MiG 29K and LCA Navy along with combat beach reconnaissance and assault demo by the Marine Commandos. This is the first time that the Navy will be organising a mega event which is not taking place at any major naval station. December 4 is observed as Navy Day to commemorate the Navy's daring attack on the Karachi harbour during the 1971 India-Pakistan War under 'Operation Trident'.

Maritime outreach

India has also significantly expanded assistance in capacity building to countries in the region. This includes giving platforms, regular training as well as routinely deploying Mobile Training Teams (MTT) overseas to facilitate capacity development. "Recently, MTT from Indian Naval Work up teams undertook operational sea checks of ships of two friendly countries - Sri Lanka and South Africa - at Trincomalee and Cape Town respectively where they worked alongside the ship's crew to achieve very high standards of operational readiness as well as safety compliance," a defence source said.

Similarly, *INS Nireekshak* conducted mix gas diving training for Sri Lankan Navy personnel in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, both in 2022 and 2023.

To date, Indian Navy has trained over 15,000 personnel from over 40 countries from the IOR, the first source stated.

NMC comes to rescue of displaced medical students in Manipur

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission has granted authorities in Manipur permission to allow displaced medical students in the hill district of Churachandpur to appear for classes and examinations in hybrid or online mode at the Churachandpur Medical College (CMC).

This comes after protests by Kuki-Zomi medical students who were displaced from their colleges in Imphal due to the ethnic conflict. The displaced students of the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal; the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal, and the SHIJA Medical College have maintained that their counterparts in Imphal have been able to continue classes and appear for examinations.

In a letter to the Health and Family Welfare Department on Wednesday, the Under-Graduate Medical Education Board said any deficiency in attendance or internal assessment should also be allowed to be completed at the CMC for displaced students. "The State authority may also make an arrangement for utilisation of displaced faculties at the Churachandpur Medical College." It directed the State authority to "ensure the completion of clerkship/practical at various district hospitals for these displaced students".

APPEAL

Master Bhargav Subrahmanyam U, son of Undavalli Harikrishna 6 years admitted in Christian Medical College, Ranipet is suffering from Thalassemia Major. This is a type of Life-threatening Blood disorder. The best option for him would be to undergo Allogeneic Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplant (PBSCT). The estimated cost of PBSCT at this Hospital is approximately Rs.15,00,000/-

Please send donation however small and save the boy. Cheque/D.D/M.O favouring **Save Poor Lives** A/c Bhargav Subrahmanyam U, **Our Account Details:** S/B Account No. 20000913487. State Bank of India, R.A. Puram, and IFSC CODE: SBIN0001855. You can donate through Google Pay No. **9884607377**, UPI Id: **savepoorlives@oksbi**. All donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. ACT.

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Loss and Damage Fund cleared on Day One of COP-28 summit

Fund, meant to compensate countries dealing with effects of climate change, gets commitments of nearly $250 million; all developing countries are eligible to apply for the Fund and every country has been 'invited' to contribute to it

Jacob Koshy
DUBAI

On the first day of the 28th Conference of Parties or COP-28 here on Thursday, member countries agreed to make operational a Loss and Damage (L&D) Fund meant to compensate countries already dealing with climate change.

To be based at the World Bank but managed by an independent secretariat, the Fund has received commitments worth nearly $250 million from countries, though billions of dollars are still needed to meet its purpose.

The Fund was first announced at the conclusion of COP-27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, last year, but it has taken five separate meetings since then, through "transitional committees", to get to a position where countries could unanimously agree on a text that was then passed by COP-28 President Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber. The demand for such a Fund is nearly three decades old.

The UAE, the host country, and Germany made a financial commitment of $100 million each; the U.S. $17 million, the U.K. approximately $50.6 million, and Japan $10 million for the Fund. The European Union committed $145 million, over and above the German contribution.

Positive start: Delegates attending the opening ceremony of the 28th UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai on Thursday. AFP

'Good momentum'

Several delegates said that an agreement to kick-start the fund on the first day of the COP was a "positive" start and set a "good momentum" on the tenor of discussions in the days ahead. "Countries must build on this and generate enough momentum in the days ahead. We must keep our eyes on the prize [of taking concrete steps to keep temperatures below 1.5 degrees Celsius]," said Simon Steill, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Representatives, including heads of states, from nearly 160 countries have confirmed attendance at the World Climate Action Summit on Friday and will make statements. Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here on Thursday.

The World Bank will be the "interim host" of the Fund for a period of four years. All developing countries are eligible to apply for and every country has been "invited" to contribute to the Fund. Payments are voluntary and a certain percentage has been set apart for a category of countries called the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Loss and damage from climate change cost about $1.5 trillion ($1,500 billion) in 2022, says a study published this week by the University of Delaware. Several developing countries and some of the poorest lost an average of about 8.3% of the GDP due to climate change. The Fund, as it stands now, does not specify how often it will be replenished.

Harjeet Singh of the Climate Action Network International has been at the forefront of demanding an L&D Fund for years. In a statement, he said, "Amid this historic decision to operationalise the Loss and Damage Fund within a year of its establishment, addressing underlying concerns becomes critical. The absence of a defined replenishment cycle raises serious questions about the fund's long-term sustainability."

Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav thanked the UN Presidency for facilitating the kick-starting of the Fund. "India has given key inputs during the transitional committee meetings and we thank the presidency for facilitating this," he said.

Exit polls show Cong. win in Telangana, Chhattisgarh, but differ over M.P., Rajasthan

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In Mizoram, the MNF and the ZPM are in a tight contest with the Congress party also making gains

Exit polls results, revealed after the Telangana Assembly election concluded on Thursday, predicted a Congress victory in the State and Chhattisgarh, but differed over the winner in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Mizoram.

In Telangana, the exit polls were unanimous in predicting a Congress win, removing the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) from power for the first time since the formation of the State in 2014. India TV-CNX predicted 63-79 seats for the Congress, 31-47 for the BRS and two to four for the BJP. P-Marq poll gave 58-71 to the Congress and 37-51 to the BRS and News 24-Today's Chanakya 71 and 33, respectively. TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat said the Congress would get 49-59 and the BRS 48-58. The ABP-C Voter poll gave 49-65 to the Congress, 38-54 to the BRS and five to 13 to the BJP.

The Congress was expected to retain Chhattisgarh, though with a lower margin than in 2018, when the party won 68 seats and the BJP 15 in the 90-member Assembly.

The India Today-Axis My India poll predicted 45 seats for the Congress and 41 for the BJP, ABP-C Voter 41-53 and 36-48, News 24-Today's Chanakya 57 and 33 and India TV-CNX 46-56 and 30-40. TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat gave 40-50 to the Congress and 35 to the BJP. P-Marq poll gave 46-54 to the Congress and 35-42 to the BJP.

Tough fight

In Rajasthan, which is known to vote out the government in every election, the ruling Congress is shown to be giving a tough fight to the BJP. The India Today-Axis My India and India TV- CNX polls showed the Congress to be ahead in a tight contest. While the first gave the Congress 86-106 seats and and the BJP 80-100, the second gave the Congress 94-104 and the BJP 80-90. News 24-Today's Chanakya gave a more solid lead of 101 to the Congress over the BJP's 89.

TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat predicted 100-110 for the BJP and 90-100 for the Congress and ABP-C Voter 71-91 for the Congress and 94-114 for the BJP. P-Marq gave 69-91 to the Congress and 105-125 to the BJP.

In Madhya Pradesh too, the exit polls differed in predicting a winner. India Today-Axis My India predicted 140-162 for the BJP and 68-90 for the Congress, News 24-Today's Chanakya 151 and 74, and India TV-CNX 140-159 and 70-89. P-Marq predicted a tight contest giving 103-122 seats to both parties. TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat said the BJP would get 106-116 and the Congress 111-121. The ABP-C Voter poll, however, gave a clear majority to the Congress with 113-137 seats and the BJP 88-112.

In Mizoram, India TV-CNX said the Mizo National Front (MNF) would get 14-18, Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) 12-16, Congress eight to 10 and BJP zero to two. ABP News-C Voter predicted that the MNF would get 15-21, ZPM 12-18 and Congress two to eight. P-Marq gave 14-20 to the MNF, nine-15 to the ZPM, seven to 13 to the Congress, and India Today-Axis My India gave three to seven to the MNF, and 28-35 to the ZPM and two to four to the Congress.

U.P. govt. declines Opposition demand for a caste census

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday declined to accept the Opposition's demand for a caste census in the State, saying the States could not conduct the exercise.

In the Assembly, Samajwadi Party MLA Sangram Yadav asked if the State government had plans to conduct a caste census and increase reservation to 75%.

"Article 246 of the Constitution stipulates who will make laws. The right to conduct census rests with the Parliament of India and the State cannot conduct the census. A law has also been made regarding this," Minister Surya Pratap Shahi said.

Many parties in Uttar Pradesh, including the Samajwadi Party, the Congress, the Bahujan Samaj Party and even BJP allies such as the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party and Apna Dal (Sonelal), have been pushing for a caste census, describing it as an important step towards social justice and to bring the poor, exploited and neglected people of society into the mainstream.

"The BJP is always against the marginalised and deprived caste groups. Our leader Akhilesh*ji* always argued that a caste-based census could alone ensure the development of every section of society. For formulating policies, we need to know the population of every social and caste group," SP spokesperson Ameeque Jamei said.

Four biggest castes are poor, youth, women, and farmers, says Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that poverty-hit people, the youth, women, and farmers were the biggest "castes" for him, and only the uplift of these "castes" would lead to the progress of the country. The remarks gain traction as the Congress has been demanding a nationwide caste census.

Mr. Modi was interacting with beneficiaries of government schemes under the *Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra* through video conference. The yatra is a part of the government's initiative for "saturation coverage" of its welfare programmes. He said that people had confidence in his government looking at its record of the past decade. "People have also seen an earlier period when governments used to consider themselves *maibaap* of the people. Therefore, even after decades of Independence, a big portion of the population was deprived of basic facilities," he said.

Last-mile connect: Union Minister Piyush Goyal watching Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address, in Mumbai on Thursday. PTI

'People had lost faith'

"More than half the population had lost faith in governments," Mr. Modi said, further stating that "governments in the past used to look at political benefit and vote bank while undertaking works".

This mindset, the Prime Minister said, was the reason for the lack of trust among people over announcements made by the government.

"We have changed this and the government in place now considers people as a form of god and we work with *seva bhav* (spirit of service) not *satta bhav* (sprit of ruling)," he said.

The Prime Minister also launched an initiative to increase the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras, which sell medicines at subsidised rates, as well as the Drone Didi Yojana, a scheme aiming to provide drones to 15,000 select women self-help groups for renting out to farmers for agricultural purposes.

The yatra is being undertaken across the country with an aim to attain saturation of flagship schemes of the government by ensuring that the benefits of these schemes reach all targeted beneficiaries in a time-bound manner, says a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

INBRIEF

At *Rozgar Mela*, PM gives out 51,000 appointment letters

Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed nearly 51,000 appointment letters to new recruits under the *Rozgar Mela* programme via video conferencing on Thursday. The recruits, selected from across the country, will be joining the government in various Ministries and departments, including the Ministries of Home Affairs, Defence, Health and Family Welfare;and Labour and Employment, and the departments of Revenue; Higher Education; School Education; and Financial Services. "Government reached the doorsteps of those who had never received any benefits," he said. He claimed that more than 13 crore people had risen out of poverty in the last five years, according to a recent study.

CBI searches Bengal MLA's residence, recovers cash

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) recovered cash from the residence of a Trinamool Congress MLA during searches conducted over his alleged involvement in irregularities in the school recruitment scam, officials said on Thursday. Searches were also conducted at the properties of Kolkata councillor Bappadittya Dasgupta and Bidhannagar councillor Debraj Chakraborty. Cash amounting to over ₹28 lakh was recovered from the residence of Jafikul Islam, Trinamool Congress MLA for Domkal. The MLA said that the cash at his residence was from the sale of land. Searches are on at different locations in and around Kolkata, Murshidabad and Cooch Behar districts in connection with the investigation.

Amid campus protests, NIT, Srinagar declares vacation

The authorities on Thursday stopped class work at two colleges, including the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Srinagar, in the wake of growing protests over an engineering student posting an "objectionable" video on social media. In an order, the NIT decided to declare winter vacations from November 30 and directed all the hostel boarders "to vacate the hostels with immediate effect". In a notice, the authorities at the Islamia College of Science and Commerce said it had suspended all academic activities for the day. The J&K Police appealed to people "not to fall prey to the nefarious designs of miscreants, out to gain mileage from it."

Kissinger, Nixon 'helped' Pakistan in 1971, documents from U.S. Archive reveal

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The National Security Archive of the U.S. circulated a bunch of documents to mark Kissinger's demise

A day after the war broke out between India and Pakistan in December 1971, U.S. President Richard Nixon and National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, broke the U.S. arms ban on Pakistan and ensured that Islamabad received air support from third countries such as Jordan.

The information was part of a bunch of documents that were declassified earlier but were circulated by the National Security Archive of the U.S. on Thursday to mark Kissinger's death. The documents have shed renewed light on the crucial 13 days in the first fortnight of December 1971 and has revealed that Nixon-Kissinger duo was worried about India launching an all-out war against Pakistan.

A cable of December 4, a day after the war started, shows that the U.S. administration had come to believe that the war was started with India attacking Pakistan and that President Yahya Khan had sent an urgent appeal for military help from Washington DC.

In the course of the conversation, Kissinger is quoted as saying: "We have had an urgent appeal from Yahya. Says his military supplies have been cut off – in very bad shape."

Kissinger then asked Nixon: "Would we help through Iran?" Iran was at that time ruled by the Shah and was favourably disposed towards the U.S. But so were a few other countries such as Jordan that had strong military ties with Pakistan at that time.

In response, Nixon said, "I like the idea. The main thing is to keep India from crumbling them up."

The revelation has added the conversations that took place during those fateful days in the U.S. when a part of the establishment led by several leading Americans, including U.S. envoy to Dhaka Archer Blood, had rebelled against the Nixon White House as the news of the genocidal violence by the Pakistani military in Dhaka and other parts of East Pakistan became known.

Nixon was of the opinion that the Indian side was getting a lot of support from within the U.S. bureaucracy, especially in the U.S. State Department, and wanted to crack down on the bureaucracy and was reassured on December 4 that Jordan had sent 17 fighter jets to Pakistan.

The document indicates that the additional aircraft were flown from third countries to Pakistan to ensure that Islamabad could defend itself if Indira Gandhi chose to turn the focus of the Indian war machine towards West Pakistan.

The documents from the Archives included the famous "Blood Telegram", the message from U.S. Consul-General Archer Blood in Dhaka.

The message did not mince words and was signed by a large number of American officials stationed in the U.S. consulate in Dhaka and called out the U.S. silence in the face of the genocidal attack as "bankruptcy".

Indira, Haksar were more than a match for Kissinger: Jairam

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Though U.S. President Richard Nixon and his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, who died on Wednesday, had created "huge headaches" for India in 1971, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her Principal Secretary, P.N. Haksar, were more than a match for them, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh said on Thursday.

Kissinger was "as immensely consequential as he was hugely controversial", Mr. Ramesh said in a post on X. Both celebrated and condemned during his life, the U.S. diplomat had a brilliance that cannot be denied, he added.

"For the last three decades, he positioned himself as a great friend and supporter of India and indeed he was. But this was not always so and in 1971 especially, President Nixon and he created huge headaches for India and thought they had us cornered," he said.

"However, Indira Gandhi and P.N. Haksar proved more than a match for them. I have described the Kissinger-Haksar and Nixon-Indira Gandhi encounters with archival detail in my book *Intertwined Lives: PN Haksar & Indira Gandhi*," he said.

In another post, Mr. Ramesh said: "P.N. Haksar, while an admirer of Kissinger's intellectual prowess, felt that he lacked moral fibre and sensitivity to democratic processes. The two never struck a rapport with each other."

INBRIEF

Seven workers killed in Surat chemical factory fire

A massive blast in a storage tank and subsequent fire in a chemical manufacturing factory in Surat killed seven workers, whose bodies were recovered from the premises in the early hours of Thursday, officials said. According to Surat District Collector Ayush Oak, out of the seven persons found dead at the chemical manufacturing unit of Aether Industries Ltd, one was an employee of the company while six others were contractual workers. The Collector said 24 people who were injured in the incident are receiving treatment in different hospitals. The fire broke out following an explosion in a large tank after leakage of inflammable chemicals.

BSP to go solo in 2024 Lok Sabha election, Mayawati says

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati on Thursday reiterated her party's stand, which she described as "firm", to fight the 2024 Lok Sabha election alone. She predicted a "multi-corned contest", and added that anti-incumbency sentiments were rising against the BJP. "Amid the cry of *achhe din* (good days), the 25 crore people of Uttar Pradesh continue to suffer from unemployment, poverty, backwardness and migration during the BJP's rule," Ms. Mayawati said in a statement. She said that people wanted a bright future and BSP was the correct choice for change.

Silkyara tunnel construction will restart soon: NHIDCL

Construction to go ahead 'simultaneously' with geological survey despite 21 previous collapses at the site; rescued workers discharged from hospital, given ₹2 lakh and paid leaves by employer

Ishita Mishra
SILKYARA

Safe return: Rescued workers leave for their respective States after being checked at the AIIMS, Rishikesh in Uttarakhand on Thursday. PTI

The 41 construction workers who were trapped for 17 days by a partial collapse of the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel were discharged from hospital on Thursday evening, just as their employer announced that construction of the tunnel will restart as soon as the 60 metres of debris is cleared.

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) is constructing the tunnel through Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd.

No one can foresee such incidents, Anshu Manish Khalkho, NHIDCL Director (Administration and Finance), told *The Hindu*.

"We have taken a break to clear the machinery that was called to the spot for the rescue operations. Even the workers need some break and we will soon take the construction work forward," he said, adding that the clearing of the debris is likely to take three to four months.

Asked if the NHIDCL would undertake any geological survey or safety audit before restarting the work, Mr. Khalkho said that the construction and geological survey would go on "simultaneously".

There had been at least 21 previous collapse incidents since the project began, he said, adding no one had ever been hurt in any of these incidents and such a situation was common at tunnel construction sites.

In February 2018, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the project to construct a 4.5-km-long two-lane bi-directional tunnel between Silkyara Bend and Barkot, with escape passages including approaches on the Dharasu-Yamunotri section.

Mr. Khalkho also disputed the claims that a team of rat-hole miners had dug through 18 metres of debris in 26 hours. Their digging speed is only one metre per six hours, he said.

Meanwhile, the 41 workers who had been trapped in the tunnel were discharged from the AIIMS, Rishikesh on Thursday evening, with doctors certifying that none of them had any health issues.

Representatives of Navayuga Engineering Company met the workers at the hospital and gave each of them a cheque for ₹2 lakh, along with paid leaves. Buses from their respective States waited outside the hospital to take them home as the workers thanked the medical and rescue teams.

India set to launch X-ray Polarimeter Satellite, says ISRO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation has announced a plan to launch its first X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat) to investigate the polarisation of intense X-ray sources.

In a recent update on its website, the ISRO said that while space-based X-ray astronomy had been established in India focusing on imaging, time-domain studies, and spectroscopy, the XPoSat mission marked a major value addition. This research, supplementing traditional time and frequency domain studies, introduced a novel dimension to X-ray astronomy, generating anticipation and excitement within the scientific community. The satellite will be launched by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. The date has not been revealed.

The XPoSat is designed for observation from a low earth orbit (non-sun synchronous orbit of 650-km altitude, low inclination of approximately six degrees) and will carry two scientific payloads. With these two payloads, the mission is capable of simultaneous studies of temporal, spectral, and polarisation features of the bright X-ray sources.

The mission objectives include the measurement of X-ray polarisation in the energy band of 8-30 keV emanating from X-ray sources and long-term spectral and temporal studies of cosmic X-ray sources in the energy band of 0.8-15 keV.

The mission life is expected to be approximately five years.

The primary payload, POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays), is designed to measure polarimetry parameters, specifically the degree and angle of polarisation, in the medium X-ray energy range of 8-30 keV photons originating from astronomical sources. The payload was developed by the Raman Research Institute, Bengaluru, with support from ISRO centres.

The secondary payload is the XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing) payload, which will provide spectroscopic information within the energy range of 0.8-15 keV.

The payload was developed by the U.R. Rao Satellite Centre, ISRO.

Dismay over addition of colour image of Dhanvantari to NMC's logo

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The NMC is the 33-member regulatory body that governs the field of medical education in the country. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After the Union Health Ministry directed the renaming of the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres to Ayushman Arogya Mandir with the tagline *Arogyam Parmam Dhanam* (health is the greatest wealth) early this week, the National Medical Commission (NMC) has joined the rebranding process by modifying its logo with a colour image of Dhanvantari and the word 'Bharat' above it.

The Puranas say Dhanvantari, an avatar of Vishnu, is the physician of the *devas* (gods) and the god of Ayurveda.

The Ministry's moves have evoked dismay among doctors, leaders, and the people who question why the Department of Health and Family Welfare, with its budget allocation of approximately 2% of the total Union government expenditure for 2023-24, was undertaking the renaming exercise for 1.16 lakh Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres across India. The Centre, in its communication to the States and Union Territories, has said that the funds proposed for renaming existing health centres is ₹3,000 a facility.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a senior official of the NMC maintained that the logo had not been changed. "Only the central picture, which was previously black and white, is now coloured," he said.

The Ayushman Bharat centres are aimed at providing a comprehensive package of services for all ages; the project receives 60% funding from the Centre and 40% from the States.

Senior Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader T.M. Thomas Isaac questioned the move in a post on social media. "Centre wants to rename Kudumba Arogya Kendram (Family Health Centre) of Kerala with its Hindi brand name Ayushman Arogya Mandir because ₹5 lakh of Central funds have been used for these primary health centres with asset value of around ₹1crore each. Ultra nationalism at its worst!," Mr. Isaac posted. The Kerala chapter of the Indian Medical Association has written to the NMC that the new logo was "not acceptable to the modern medical fraternity".

"NMC is trying to divert attention from the incompetent handling of core issues affecting the profession," Right to Information activist K.V. Babu said.

The NMC is the 33-member regulatory body that governs the field of medical education in the country.

No 'successful infiltration' along Bangladesh border, says BSF D-G

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

No "successful infiltration" is taking place along the Bangladesh border, Border Security Force (BSF) Director-General Nitin Agrawal said on Thursday, adding that appropriate action is taken if someone is caught entering India through illegal means.

"In our knowledge, no successful infiltration is taking place. They also know it is not easy now, no one is spared if caught. Action is taken and they are handed back to Bangladesh," Mr. Agrawal said.

He was speaking to presspersons during the annual press conference at the BSF camp at Hazaribagh in Jharkhand on the eve of the 59th Raising Day of the force.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is expected to take the salute of the ceremonial parade on Friday.

> Pakistan Rangers have been giving XYZ reasons for ceasefire violation but they are not at all convincing
>
> **NITIN AGRAWAL**
> Director-General, Border Security Force

The 2.65-lakh-strong BSF guards the 4,096.7-km border with Bangladesh and the 2,289.66-km border with Pakistan. The force was raised on December 1, 1965.

Mr. Agrawal said the jury was still out on why Pakistan broke the ceasefire pact along the International Border in Jammu in October and November. The Pakistan Rangers could not provide a convincing reply at the flag meetings with the BSF, he said.

"We have no clue ... we are analysing every aspect. During flag meetings, they [Pakistan Rangers] have been giving XYZ reasons for this [ceasefire violation] but they are not at all convincing. They themselves felt that they were not sounding convincing. They just mentioned something for the sake of it," Mr. Agrawal said.

The Pakistan border has largely remained silent since February 25, 2021, when the Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan agreed to a "strict observance of all agreements, understandings and ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) and all other sectors".

He said effective retaliatory firing was done during the ceasefire violations by Pakistan and "there were reports of heavy casualties there".

Chinese-made drones

From November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023, as many as 90 drones or unmanned aerial vehicles have been recovered by the BSF on the western border. Eighty-one such recoveries were made in Punjab and nine in Rajasthan.

Mr. Agrawal said most of the drones were "manufactured in China".

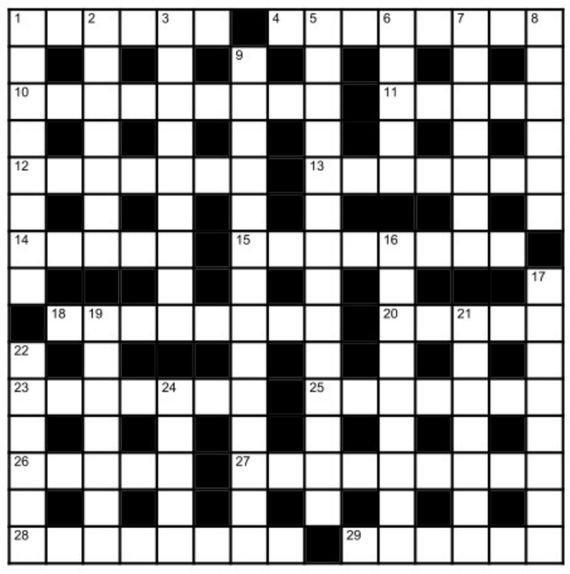
"The 81 drones were brought down by us along Punjab border. Sometimes drones are found later by villagers living along the border who inform us and we take action. We receive cooperation from the border population in detecting narcotics and other substances dropped by the drones," he said.

TH CROSSWORD + 14034

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Follows time frames (6)
4 Confidante arrested - brief hold-up in the capital city (8)
10 A national dish - probably West European comes first (5,4)
11 Either way, it's a law (5)
12 Active national service perhaps enlivens this country (7)
13 I somehow retain passivity (7)
14 Preserved over time, lemon tree? (5)
15 Bird finally caught by the river (8)
18 Hood by himself, without hood (2,6)
20 River country (5)
23 Farm animals he had briefly kept here (7)
25 Hope he goes - media bully (7)
26 Heads of all middle eastern emirates regard him as very rich (5)
27 Six attempts allowed - provided it becomes glass (9)
28 Something to make you remember those two girls (8)
29 She's in a delirious medical condition (6)

Down

1 Shows nervousness, the fool! Game's unfinished (8)
2 Fat girl in a puzzle (7)
3 Decode "Kashmiriyat", I'm not involved as a warrior (9)
5 Unhappy, sad in the opening (4,2,3,5)
6 Departed without breakfast, finally some coffee (5)
7 Design it, especially to keep torches (7)
8 Cut up over contract, gets trick (6)
9 Busy waterway, so at first drove off (7,2,5)
16 Only the French have fancy iPhone, he loves his wine (9)
17 May be she is in air craft, between Holyhead and Dublin (5,3)
19 England in the centre, followed by Wales perhaps and Scotland on top - It's chaotic (7)
21 Old Greek racing off to surround Constantinople finally (7)
22 Calories bad, so removed sweet stuff (6)
24 Share market holds women in bondage (5)

SUDOKU

1					3		9	
			5					4
5			1		2		7	
	7					5		9
				5				
9		4					6	
	1		6		7			2
6					1			
	2		3					7

No.SS5994 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	2	1	5	9	8	6	4	7
9	7	4	1	6	2	3	5	8
5	6	8	7	4	3	1	2	9
4	5	6	8	1	7	9	3	2
7	8	2	9	3	5	4	1	6
1	3	9	6	2	4	8	7	5
2	4	5	3	8	9	7	6	1
6	9	7	4	5	1	2	8	3
8	1	3	2	7	6	5	9	4

FAITH

Bewitching archa form

The 10th mantra of Apratiratha sukta of Taittiriya Samhita can be taken to refer to Thirumalirunchola or Azhagar Kovil, said V.S. Karunakaracharyar, giving the Vedic mantra a new interpretation. The word dhvaja is used in the tenth mantra. While dhvaja means flag or banner, it also means that which helps in brewing an intoxicant. But what is the connection between this meaning of the word dhvaja and the Lord of Thirumalirunchola?

First of all, the Lord's archa forms are bewitching and anyone who sees His archa forms forgets everything else, like one who is intoxicated. Vedanta Desika, in his Paduka Sahasram, wonders why his words are not being heeded by Paduka Devi. And then he has the answer. She is constantly drinking the nectar that comes from the Lord's feet, and so she does not hear Desika's words! Once a person loses himself in the Lord's archa form, he is unaware of anything else going on around him. Now while this is true of all His archa forms, the reference to Thirumalirunchola is even more significant. Here there is a Madhavi mandapa. It is here that Nupura Ganga beholds and tastes the sweetness of Lord Azhagar. Having tasted this, she is like one who has taken an intoxicating drink (madhu), and she becomes Madhavi. So, the word 'dhvaja' in the Vedic mantra could be taken as a reference to Azhagar Kovil.

MOSCOW

Russian court bans 'international LGBT movement' for 'extremism'

REUTERS

Russia on Thursday banned the "international LGBT movement," claiming it was an extremist group, a move that cements a long crackdown on the community. The judge ruled that "the international LGBT public movement and its subdivisions" were extremist, and issued a "ban on its activities". AFP

PHNOM PENH

Cambodian PM Hun Manet says won't build dams on Mekong River

AP

Cambodia's leader said on Thursday that the country will not build dams on the Mekong River. Prime Minister Hun Manet said building dams on the mainstream of the Mekong would have "a huge impact" on the environment and ecology in the river itself and the Tonle Sap lake, a key source of fish for Cambodians. AFP

NEW YORK

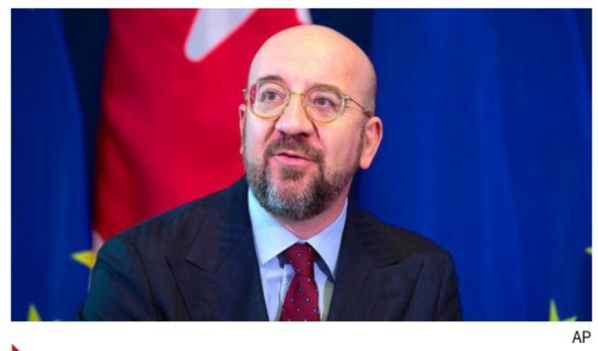
Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen says China invasion unlikely for now

AFP

China is not likely to consider a major invasion of Taiwan for now due to domestic challenges, the island's President Tsai Ing-wen said on Wednesday, although Beijing is trying to sway its upcoming election. "I think the Chinese leadership at this juncture is overwhelmed by its internal challenges," Ms. Tsai said. AFP

BRUSSELS

EU defence spending to reach record €270 billion in 2023



AP

EU military spending will reach a record €270 billion ($295 billion) in 2023, the bloc's chief Charles Michel said on Thursday. Despite the record figure, Mr. Michel said the European Union "must work towards a defence single market" to better coordinate spending and ensure the bloc can act faster together. AFP

Gaza truce extended by one day as hostage talks continue

Israel says it will maintain the truce until Hamas stops releasing captives, at which point it will resume military operations; the Biden administration asks Israel to operate with greater precision

Associated Press
JERUSALEM

Israel and Hamas agreed at the last minute on Thursday to extend their ceasefire in Gaza by another day. But any further renewal of the deal that has seen dozens of hostages and prisoners released could prove more challenging since Hamas is expected to demand greater concessions for many of the remaining captives.

International pressure has mounted for the ceasefire to continue as long as possible after nearly eight weeks of Israeli bombardment and a ground campaign in Gaza that have killed thousands of Palestinians, uprooted more than three-quarters of the population of 2.3 million and led to a humanitarian crisis.

The talks appear to be growing tougher, however, with Hamas having already freed most of the women and children kidnapped during the deadly October 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war. The militants are expected to make greater demands in return for freeing men and soldiers.

For survival: Palestinian children standing in queue for food in Rafah, Gaza Strip, on Thursday. AP

Qatar, which has played a key role in mediating with Hamas, announced that the truce was being extended on Thursday.

The announcement followed a last-minute standoff, with Hamas saying Israel had rejected a proposed list that included seven living captives and the remains of three who the group said were killed in Israeli airstrikes. Israel later said Hamas submitted an improved list.

Israel says it will maintain the truce until Hamas stops releasing captives, at which point it will resume military operations aimed at eliminating the group. The Biden administration has told Israel that it must operate with far greater precision if it expands the ground offensive to the south, where many Palestinians have sought refuge.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is under intense pressure from families of the hostages to bring them home. But his far-right governing partners are also pushing him to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed, and could bolt his coalition if he is seen as making too many concessions.

The initial truce – which began on Friday and has now been extended twice – called for the release of women and children. Israeli officials say Gaza militants still hold around 30 women and children, who would all be released in a few days if the swaps continue at the current rate.

It's not clear how many of the women might be soldiers. For soldiers and the men still in captivity, Hamas is expected to push for comparable releases of Palestinian men or prominent detainees, a deal Israel may resist. Israel says around 125 men are still held hostage, including soldiers. Thus far, Hamas has released some men – mostly Thai labourers.

An Israeli official involved in hostage negotiations said talks on a further extension for the release of civilian men and soldiers were still preliminary, and that a deal would not be considered until all the women and children are out. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because talks were ongoing.

Gunmen kill three people in Jerusalem, say police

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Gunmen killed three people and wounded several more in Jerusalem on Thursday, the Israeli police said, in an attack shortly after extension of a truce in the Israel-Hamas war.

The police said both attackers were from annexed east Jerusalem and were shot dead at the scene, near a bus stop on the western side of Jerusalem, where there are no checkpoints. "Two terrorists arrived in a car, one of them armed with an M-16 and the other with a pistol," and opened fire, Jerusalem police chief Doron Torgeman told reporters at the scene. The two gunmen were shot dead "after the attack by two off-duty IDF (Israeli Army) soldiers and another civilian who fired at them", police said.

"A police search of the terrorists' car revealed ammunition and weaponry," it added.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog, at a meeting with visiting U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, called the attack an example of the "endless war that we are fighting against terror organisations, especially Hamas".

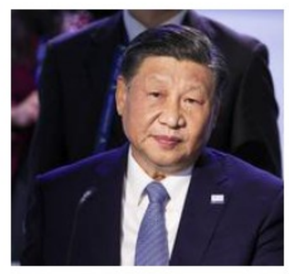
China calls for immediate 'sustained humanitarian truce' in Israel-Hamas war

Agence France-Presse
BEIJING

China on Thursday called for a "sustained humanitarian truce" in the Israel-Hamas conflict in a position paper released by its Foreign Ministry.

"Parties to the conflict should immediately realise a durable and sustained humanitarian truce," the document said.

It called for a "comprehensive ceasefire and end of the fighting". And it urged the UN Security Council to send a "clear message" opposing the "forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population" as well as "calling for the release of all civilians and hostages held captive".



Xi Jinping

The body must also "demand that parties to the conflict exercise restraint to prevent the conflict from widening and uphold peace and stability in West Asia", it added.

China said last week it welcomed a truce between Israel and Hamas, which began Friday and led to hostages being freedand the release of more than 100 Palestinian prisoners.

The truce, which is scheduled to end early on Thursday, has brought a temporary halt to fighting that began on October 7 when Hamas militants poured over the border into Israel, killing 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and kidnapping about 240, according to the Israeli authorities.

Israel's subsequent air and ground campaign in Gaza has killed nearly 15,000 people, mostly civilians, according to Hamas officials, and reduced large parts of the north of the territory to rubble.

Balochistan to expel more Afghans

Associated Press
QUETTA

A Pakistani province is setting targets for police to arrest and deport thousands of Afghans it says are in the country illegally, officials said on Thursday.

The measure is part of a nationwide crackdown following a sharp decline in the expulsion of Afghans living in Pakistan without legal permission. Near the Chaman border crossing, residents were protesting against new travel visa requirements aimed at cutting down on illegal immigration that have disrupted traffic in the area.

Some of those targeted for deportation had gone to remote areas in Pakistan to avoid arrest, authorities said. "Instructions have gone to police to arrest Afghans living in Pakistan illegally," said Jan Achakzai, spokesperson for the government in southwestern Balochistan province.

Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State under Presidents Nixon and Ford, dies at 100

Associated Press

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the diplomat with the thick glasses and gravelly voice who dominated foreign policy as the U.S. extricated itself from Vietnam and broke down barriers with China, died on Wednesday, his consulting firm said. He was 100.

With his gruff yet commanding presence and behind-the-scenes manipulation of power, Kissinger exerted uncommon influence on global affairs under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, earning both vilification and the Nobel Peace Prize. Decades later, his name still provoked impassioned debate over foreign policy landmarks long past.

Kissinger's power grew during the turmoil of Watergate, when the politically attuned diplomat assumed a role akin to co-president to the weakened Nixon.

"No doubt my vanity was piqued," Kissinger later wrote of his expanding influence. "But the dominant emotion was a premonition of catastrophe."

A Jew who fled Nazi Germany with his family in his teens, Kissinger in his later years cultivated the reputation of respected statesman, giving speeches, offering advice to Republicans and Democrats alike and managing a global consulting business. He turned up in President Donald Trump's White House on multiple occasions. But Nixon-era documents and tapes, as they trickled out over the years, brought revelations – many in Kissinger's own words – that sometimes cast him in a harsh light.

Henry Kissinger

Controversial policies

Never without his detractors, Kissinger after he left government was dogged by critics who argued that he should be called to account for his policies on Southeast Asia and support of repressive regimes in Latin America.

For eight restless years – first as National Security Adviser, later as Secretary of State, and for a time in the middle holding both titles – Kissinger ranged across the breadth of major foreign policy issues. He conducted the first "shuttle diplomacy" in the quest for West Asian peace.

He used secret channels to pursue ties between the U.S. and China, ending decades of isolation and mutual hostility.

He initiated the Paris negotiations that ultimately provided a face-saving means – a "decent interval," he called it – to get the U.S. out of a costly war in Vietnam. Two years later, Saigon fell to the communists. And he pursued a policy of detente with the Soviet Union.

Asked during a CBS interview in the leadup to his 100th birthday about those who view his conduct of foreign policy over the years as a kind of "criminality," Kissinger was nothing but dismissive.

"That's a reflection of their ignorance," he said. "It wasn't conceived that way. It wasn't conducted that way."

2023 will be hottest year ever recorded, says UN body

Agence France-Presse
GENEVA

This year is set to be the hottest ever recorded, the UN said on Thursday, demanding urgent action to rein in global warming and stem the havoc following in its wake.

The UN's World Meteorological Organization warned that 2023 had shattered a whole host of climate records, with extreme weather leaving "a trail of devastation and despair".

"It's a deafening cacophony of broken records," said WMO chief Petteri Taalas. "Greenhouse gas levels are record high. Global temperatures are record-high. Sea level rise is record high. Antarctic sea ice is record low."

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 233(A)to 239 (A) /2023-24/KWA/PHC/TVLA (1) JJM- RWSS to Madapally-Design, Construction of 4.5mld WTP, O&M for 3 years. (2) JJM-Construction of 15 LL capacity OH Tank Laying clear water pumping main to Kuttoor tank and Distribution System, Approach road, road restoration (3)JJM-CWSS to Puramattom, Koipuram --Design and construction of 12 m dia intake well cum pump house, 40 MLD WTP, 800 mm DI K9 RWPM,CWPM, Supply & erection of RW pumpsets, Transformers, GLSR/OHSR, road restoration, O&M for 3 years.(4)JJM-CWSS to Puramattom, Koipuram - Supplying and laying various clear water pumping mains(DIK9), and road restoration. (5) JJM-CWSS to Puramattom, Koipuram-Design, construction and commissioning of OHSRs and GLSRs. (6)JJM- WSS to Seethathode - Laying DI pumping main from Sump at Plappally to G.L.S.R at Lahai, DI Gravity line to Thulappally, supply and erection of CW Pump Sets, Construction of 3.50 LL capacity BP Tank b (7) JJM - WSS to Seethathode - Construction of GLSRs, laying CWPM and road restoration. **EMD :** Rs. 200000,500000,500000, 500000,500000,500000,500000, **Tender fee :** Rs. 13010, 19518, 19518, 19518, 19518, 19518, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 22-12-2023 02:00:pm. **Phone :** 04692600162
Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
KWA-JB-GL-6-1728-2023-24 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Pathanamthitta

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact number 96461 47777)

TENDER ENQUIRY No. TSQ-1144 / RDSS

Dy. CE/TL(Design), PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for 1 No. Package under RDSS for Full Turnkey Basis works related to 66kV Sub-Stations as per PSPCL Specification No. TSQ-1144 / RDSS. For detailed NIT & Bidding Document, please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 30.11.2023, (11:00 AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in.

C-856/23 76155/12/2451/2023/30191

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001.
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in, (Contact No. 96461-22185)

Tender Enquiry No. 299/SS(D)-II (under RDSS) | Dated: 29.11.2023

Dy.CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, PSPCL, C-1 Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Manufacture, Testing, Supply & Delivery of 35 nos. 66kV SF_6 Circuit Beakers (under RDSS). For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to https://gem.gov.in/ from 30.11.2023 (09:00AM onwards), having GeM bid Number as "GEM/2023/B/4263859"

Note:- Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at https://gem.gov.in/

C-858/23 76155/12/2453/2023/30193

GMCKKD/3102/2023-S4
QUOTATION EXTENSION NOTICE
Quotation Number : GMCKKD/3102/2023-S4
Due date and time for receipt of Quotations: 30.12.2023, 3.00 PM
Designation and address of officer to whom the quotation is to be addressed: Principal, Govt. Medical College, Kozhikode, Ph: 0495 2350216, 2350200
Superscription : Purchase of Journals for Central Library, Govt. Medical College, Kozhikode
3076/F3/2023/I&PRD

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001
Phone No.- 0175-2207649, Email id:- se-it1@pspcl.in
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in

Tender Enquiry No. 309/DIT-941/Vol-3 dated 30.11.2023

Dy. Chief Engineer/IT (A&PM), Ground Floor, 7-Story Building, PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala invites e-tender for Supply, Installation & Commissioning of 2083 No. modems for AMR alongwith FMS. For detailed NIT & Tender specifications please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 30.11.2023, 3:00 pm onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in.

C-859/23 76155/12/2454/2023/30194

Government of Kerala
Published Tenders from 27-11-2023 to 29-11-2023
Directorate of Homoeopathy
Tender ID: 2023_DH_626632_1 * MANAGING DIRECTOR * Re Tender for Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Valida * Closing Date: 14-Dec-2023 * PAC: Rs10833750
Visit https://etenders.kerala.gov.in for more details.
Ro.No:27-29/Nov/2023/PRD/(N)10

ओएनजीसी ONGC Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.
ऑयल एण्ड नेचुरल गैस कॉरपोरेशन लिमिटेड
EASTERN OFFSHORE ASSET, KAKINADA (A.P.)
Pre-Qualification Criteria (PQC)
Operation and Maintenance Services contract for U Field Production facilities & Onshore MEG Facility at OOT for 03 years
ONGC, Eastern Offshore Asset, Kakinada invites for submission of Pre-Qualification Criteria (PQC) documents from reputed and interested bidders having experience in the field of Oil and Natural Gas for Operation and Maintenance Services contract for U Field Production facilities & Onshore MEG Facility at OOT,Odalarevu, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Konaseema District, AP, India for 03 years. **Last date for receipt of PQC documents: 21 days from the date of publishing of PQC**. Note: For further details and PQC document, please logon to our website:**https://tenders.ongc.co.in**. Prospective vendors having the required capability may submit the documents through e-mail: **spgkakinada@ongc.co.in** In case of any queries, CGM (P), e-mail: **spgkakinada@ongc.co.in** may be contacted.

TNPL TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Unit - 1 : Kagithapuram - 639 136. Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu. Ph.: 04324 - 277001 (10 Lines)
Unit - 2 : Mondipatti - 621 306, Trichy District, Tamil Nadu Ph.: 04332 - 261600

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Tender No.	Nature of work	Due date
232413 005461	Annual Rate Contract for Procurement of Auto Garage Equipment spares	16.12.2023
232413 005508	Procurement of Force Traveller Ambulance with AC Provision and Power Steering	13.12.2023
232413 005373	Re-Rubber Lining of PM #1 Speed Flow Applicator Rolls	15.12.2023
232423 003422	Procurement of 90 GSM Plain Kraft Reels & Sheets of various sizes in 24 BF for TNPL Unit - II	15.12.2023
232413 005393	Procurement of Reinforcement Steel (TMT Steel)	18.12.2023
232423 003455	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IP Based EPABX (Telephone exchange) for School & Colony in TNPL Unit - II	22.12.2023
Email	232413005461; 5508 - purchase.auto@tnpl.co.in 232413005373 - purchase.imp@tnpl.co.in 232423003422 - purchasepacking.u2@tnpl.co.in 232413005393 - purchase.civil@tnpl.co.in 232423003455 - pmd1@tnpl.co.in	

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website & NIC portal only. Detailed terms & conditions, Qty, Tender fee, EMD, etc., are available in tender document at our websites: **www.tnpl.com / https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

DIPR/6445/Tender/2023 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

INBRIEF

Aurobindo arm's generic for asthma gets U.S. FDA nod

Aurobindo Pharma subsidiary Eugia Pharma Specialities has received U.S. FDA's final approval to manufacture and market Budesonide Inhalation Suspension, 0.5 mg/2 mL single-dose ampule. Bioequivalent and therapeutically equivalent to Astrazeneca Pharmaceuticals Pulmicort Respules Inhalation Suspension, the product's estimated market size was $226.4 million for 12 months ended September. Aurobindo plans to unveil the product in FY25.

Fedbank Financial settles on muted note in debut trade

Shares of Fedbank Financial Services Ltd. (Fedfina), a subsidiary of Federal Bank, made a muted market debut on Thursday and ended at par with the issue price of ₹140 on the BSE. The stock listed at ₹137.75, registering a decline of 1.60% from the issue price, on the BSE. During the day, it hit a high of ₹148 and a low of ₹133.15. On the NSE, the stock made its debut at ₹138, lower by 1.42%. In intra-day, the company shares hit a high of ₹148.25 and a low of ₹133. PTI

Textiles Ministry to host global meet on cotton from Dec. 2-5

The Ministry of Textiles will host the plenary meeting of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) in Mumbai from December 2 to 5. Union Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal will inaugurate the event in which more than 400 delegates from 35 countries will take part. The theme for the meeting is 'Cotton Value Chain: Local Innovations for Global prosperity'.

Core sector growth speeds to 12.1%

Base effect helps bolster the uptick this October, output levels also see a sequential advance of 2.84% from September 2023; Economists caution that the shift in the festive calendar this year obfuscates the year-on-year comparisons in October

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's core sector growth quickened to 12.1% in October from a revised uptick of 9.2% in September, with all eight sectors clocking positive growth for only the third time in 18 months, and five of them logging double-digit surges.

Base effects from last October, when the Index of Core Industries had grown a mere 0.7% and four sectors had recorded a contraction, helped bolster the uptick this October, but output on average also saw a sequential rise of 2.84% from September 2023.

The core sectors constitute little over 40% of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and their improved headline growth augurs well for industrial output to grow at a higher pace than the three-month low of 5.8% recorded in September.

Electricity generation led October's performance with a 20.3% rise, followed by coal output that was up 18.4%, Cement (17.1%), Steel (11%), and Natural Gas (9.9%). Fertilisers' production grew at a five-month high pace of 5.3%, while refinery products rose 4.2% compared to a 3.1% contraction last October.

"Fertilisers production has increased in preparation for the Rabi crop sowing this month and Cement has benefited from a negative base effect as well as a pick up in housing sector," said Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at Bank of Baroda.

ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar said base effects from last October which had a higher number of holidays, distorted the picture. "The shift in the festive calendar this year obfuscates year-on-year comparisons in October and November, thereby making it more meaningful to look at the average growth performance for these months," she reckoned.

Growth boost

Core sectors witness strong growth in Oct. with all eight sectors clocking growth for only the third time in 18 months

- Electricity generation leads Oct.'s performance with a 20.3% rise, followed by coal output that is up 18.4%
- Last October, the Index of Core Industries grew a mere 0.7% and four sectors had recorded a contraction

- The core sectors constitute about 40% of IIP and their improved growth augurs well for industrial output

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	66,988	0.13
US Dollar	83.37	-0.06
Gold	63,200	-0.47
Brent oil	83.51	2.11

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2358.55	-38.05
Adani Ports	825.50	-10.05
Apollo Hosp	5528.95	107.00
Asian Paints	3119.90	-28.45
Axis Bank	1074.25	14.10
Bajaj Auto	6090.55	20.60
Bajaj Finserv	1673.50	20.00
Bajaj Finance	7121.90	-8.20
Bharti Airtel	1014.70	19.30
BPCL	435.70	7.05
Britannia Ind	4852.65	49.00
Cipla	1212.30	10.75
Coal India	342.15	-0.20
Divis Lab	3788.70	58.95
Dr Reddys Lab	5788.15	72.80
Eicher Motors	3896.90	84.65
Grasim Ind	2005.45	2.20
HCL Tech	1340.90	6.95
HDFC Bank	1558.80	-0.35
HDFC Life	690.75	15.10
Hero MotoCorp	3819.05	72.15
Hindalco	515.65	-1.80
Hind Unilever	2545.55	20.50
ICICI Bank	934.95	-4.65
IndusInd Bank	1466.10	-17.45
Infosys	1455.15	-4.45
ITC	435.80	-1.40
JSW Steel	801.10	7.85
Kotak Bank	1755.45	2.00
L&T	3109.20	25.45
LTIMindtree Ltd.	5536.70	-51.80
M&M	1647.75	28.65
Maruti Suzuki	10608.70	9.45
NestleIndia	24236.15	168.65
NTPC	261.30	2.90
ONGC	194.95	2.95
PowerGrid Corp	208.95	-2.10
Reliance Ind	2377.45	-23.25
SBI Life	1435.25	27.40
State Bank	564.75	-3.85
Sun Pharma	1225.85	23.65
TataConsumerProduct	940.75	7.20
Tata Motors	706.40	-5.95
Tata Steel	127.90	0.15
TCS	3487.60	-26.15
Tech Mahindra	1220.95	-0.75
Titan	3490.60	61.30
UltraTech Cement	9003.65	270.90
UPL	570.65	0.60
Wipro	413.05	6.80

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 30

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.20	83.52
Euro	90.83	91.19
British Pound	105.18	105.59
Japanese Yen (100)	56.39	56.61
Chinese Yuan	11.66	11.71
Swiss Franc	95.09	95.46
Singapore Dollar	62.25	62.50
Canadian Dollar	61.13	61.37
Malaysian Ringitt	17.85	17.93
Australian Dollar	54.98	55.20

Source:Indian Bank

Fiscal deficit touches 45% of full-year target

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The government's fiscal deficit at the end of October stood at ₹8.03 lakh crore, or 45% of the full-year budget estimate, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts on Thursday.

In actual terms, the fiscal deficit - the difference between expenditure and revenue - was at ₹8.03 lakh crore during the April-October period of 2023-24.

In the corresponding period last year, the deficit was at 45.6% of the budget estimates of 2022-23.

For 2023-24, the fiscal deficit of the government is estimated to be at ₹17.86 lakh crore, or 5.9% of the GDP. The Government of India received ₹15.9 lakh crore (58.6% of corresponding BE 2023-24 of total receipts) up to October 2023 comprising ₹13.01 lakh crore tax revenue (net), ₹2.65 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and ₹22,990 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

Non-debt capital receipts consists of recovery of loans (₹14,990 crore) and miscellaneous capital receipts (₹8,000 crore).

As per CGA data, total expenditure was at ₹23.94 lakh crore (53% of corresponding BE 2023-24) during April-October 2023.

Tata Tech valued at $6.4 bn after more than doubling on debut

Reuters
BENGALURU

Shares of Tata Technologies almost trebled on their trading debut on Thursday, valuing the first Tata Group company to go public in almost two decades at ₹53,264 crore ($6.4 billion).

The Tata Motors' unit, which provides engineering and technology services to auto, aero and heavy machinery makers, beat the valuation of its peers like KPIT Technologies and L&T Technology Services and sister Tata Group company Tata Elxsi, which are valued between ₹40,900 crore and ₹51,400 crore.

'The listing was beyond imagination... and the rally to ₹1,400 was even more unexpected'

Tata Technologies' listing-day gains were also among the best since 2021-end, according to LSEG data and analysts.

The shares surged past the IPO price of ₹500 to debut at ₹1,200 before hitting the day's high of ₹1,400 and ending 163% higher at ₹1,313.

"The listing was beyond imagination... and post that, the rally to ₹1,400 was even more unexpected," Arun Kejriwal, founder of Kejriwal Research and Investment Services, said, adding that short-term investors could book profits.

The company's future earnings through a part of financial year ending March 2025 appear to have been discounted at the current valuation, Mr. Kejriwal added.

IT services provider Tata Consultancy Services, which listed in 2004, was the last Tata Group company to go public.

India has seen a record 201 IPOs so far this year.

Shares of another stock market debutant on Thursday, Gandhar Oil Refinery, closed 78.3% higher.

Tata Coffee gets nod for ₹450-crore expansion

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Tata Coffee said on Thursday it had received the board's approval for capacity expansion of its Vietnam-based wholly owned subsidiary firm at an investment of ₹450 crore.

The board has approved the setting up of an additional 5,500-tonne freeze-dried coffee facility in Vietnam, the company said in a filing. Tata Coffee said the additional capacity would be created with an investment of $53.3 million (approximately ₹450 crore).

The funds will be sourced from internal accruals and bank financing, Tata Coffee said.

Go First CEO Khona exits airline, laments 6-month salary dues

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Go First CEO Kaushik Khona announced his exit from the airline in an e-mail to employees six months after it voluntarily entered into insolvency resolution due to a fund crunch it blamed on Pratt and Whitney engine failures.

"Things have not worked in our favour inspite of huge efforts. Mr. Khona wrote in an email. "Even salaries have not been paid for almost six months despite several requests and representations to all concerned including the Resolution Professional (RP), COC and the Wadia Group," he added.

Kaushik Khona

Go First suspended operations on May 3 and announced its decision to file for insolvency resolution.

Last week, the National Company Law Tribunal granted a 90-day extension for the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process, failing which the airline will be put into liquidation.

Whirlpool to sell 24% stake in India unit to reduce debt

Reuters

Whirlpool said it will sell up to 24% of its stake in the company's India business in a bid to reduce debt, weeks after the unit reported weaker profit due to rising competition and pricing pressures.

The company did not disclose a deal value and does not expect the sale of Whirlpool of India to impact its previously issued full-year forecast, Whirlpool said in a filing. The Indian unit in November reported a 23.7% drop in second-quarter profit, the fifth quarterly decline in a row, hurt by weak demand and price reductions to stay competitive.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Karnataka, constituted by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, vide its letter No. SEIAA 163 CON 2023 dated: 10-11-2023 has accorded Environmental Clearance to M/s. Vedant Homes for construction of Residential Apartment and Commercial Development at Plot No. R-9-A of Hardware Sector at Hitech Defense & Aerospace Park, Bengaluru as per applicable provisions of EIA Notification, 2006 and amended thereafter.

Copy of the Clearance letter is available with the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board and may also be seen on the website of the SEIAA, Karnataka at http://seiaa.karnataka.gov.in/, http://seiaa.kar.nic.in & http://environmentclearance.nic.in.

This Public Notice is issued in compliance with the conditions laid down in the above Environmental Clearance.

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Office of The Executive Engineer Public Works Division Latur
E-mail: latur.ee@mahapwd.gov.in Telephone: 02382/200868 Fax 02382/200147

Corrigendum no 01
Notice No. B-2 (SBD)LTR-21 For 2023-24 E-Tender

REVISED E-TENDER TIME TABLE

		DATE	REVISED DATE	TIME
1	Publishing Date	02/11/2023	03/11/2023	18.55
2	Document Download/Sale Start Date	02/11/2023	03/11/2023	18.55
3	Document Download/Sale Expiry Date	02/12/2023	04/12/2023	18.55
4	Bid Submission Start Date	02/11/2023	03/11/2023	18.55
5	Bid Submission Closing Date	02/12/2023	04/12/2023	18.55
6	Pre-Bid Meeting This Work, C.E.Public Works Region Office, Nanded	10/11/2023	10/11/2023	15.00
7	Bid Opening Date	04/12/2023	06/12/2023	11.00

NOTE: The terms and conditions of the earlier tender notice will remain applicable.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Public Work Division,Latur

DGIPR/2023/2024/5223

India's oil imports from Russia see a rebound

Reuters
NEW DELHI

India's Russian oil imports rebounded in November after several plants came back online from planned maintenance and as fuel consumption rose during the Diwali festive season, preliminary data from ship-tracking firms Kpler and Vortexa showed.

The world's third-biggest importer and consumer of oil has boosted purchases of Russian oil sold at a discount after imports from Russia were shunned by some Western countries following its invasion of Ukraine last year.

Data from Kpler and Vortexa showed a 9% and 5% rise in India's monthly intake of Russian oil in November from the previous month to 1.73 million barrels per day (bpd) and 1.68 million bpd, respectively.

Imports are still lower than the almost 2 million bpd peak in May as discounts have narrowed.

"India has been roaring back to strength ever since its autumn refinery maintenance period was completed by early November," Kpler's crude analyst Viktor Katona said.

UltraTech to buy Kesoram's cement business for ₹54 bn.

Reuters
BENGALURU

India's UltraTech Cement said on Thursday it will buy the cement business of Kesoram Industries in an all-stock deal valued at ₹53.79 billion ($645.41 million), in a move to add heft to its hold in South India.

As a part of the deal, UltraTech will issue one share for every 52 shares of Kesoram and give UltraTech ownership of two integrated cement units in southern Indian states of Karnataka and Telangana.

The deal implies an offer price of ₹173.15 per share, a 24.2% premium to Kesoram's last close.

Market leader UltraTech is looking to boost its capacity ambitions in a highly competitive Indian cement sector, months after smaller peer Ambuja Cements, owned by billionaire Gautam Adani, bought a majority stake in Sanghi Industries.

The transaction, expected to be completed within 9-12 months, will accelerate UltraTech's path to achieving its stated goal of 200 million tons per annum (mtpa) cement capacity in India, UltraTech said.

With this deal, Kesoram would be left with its smaller business segment– rayon, transparent paper and chemicals.

Government of Jharkhand
Rural Works Department
JHARKHAND STATE RURAL ROADS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (JSRRDA)
3rd Floor, F.F.P. Building, Dhurwa, Ranchi 834004

VERY SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
(National Competitive Bidding Through e-Procurement)

Re-e-Tender No.- 159/ 2023-24 **Dated: 28.11.2023**

4th Call
(PR NO.- 287515)

The undersigned on behalf of Government of Jharkhand invites item rate bids through e-Procurement from the eligible bidders registered* in appropriate class with any State/Central Government/State /Central Government Organization for construction and maintenance for five years of the works (List of schemes shall be displayed in the website pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in) of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY-III).

Sr. No.	Package ID	District Name	Block name	WORK NAME	Road/ LSB	Package wise Roads Length (in M)	Cost of Const. and Maint. With GST (in Lakh)	Earnest Money (in Lakh)	Time Period
1	JH-P3-22-23-GOD-LSB-01	Godda	Boarijore	Local Nala at Ch-0.395 KM	LSB	116.80	709.108	14.19	18 Months
			Boarijore	Local River at Ch- 6.717km	LSB				
			Boarijore	Local River Mahua Bathan at ch-7.805km	LSB				
			Boarijore	Local Nala at Ch-16.225 KM	LSB				

The bid should be submitted online in the website **pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in**. The bidders should have valid Digital Signature Certificate for online submission of bid.

Details of bid submission is as under:

Procurement Officer	Place of Opening	Availability of tender (on-line) for bidding		Last date & time of seeking clarification	Last date and time of bid submission	Date & time of opening (on-line) of tender	
		From	To			Technical bid	Financial bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
Chief Engineer, JSRRDA, Ranchi	Chief Engineer, JSRRDA, Ranchi	**30.11.2023 at 10.00 AM**	**14.12.2023 upto 5.00 PM**	**08.12.2023 upto 2.00 PM**	**14.12.2023 upto 5.00 PM**	**14.12.2023 at 05.30 PM**	To be informed later

** Non-registered bidders may also submit bid, however the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authority before signing the contract.*
*** Cost may change.*

Note :-
1. Amount of Bid Security should be taken as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding Document.
2. Cost of Bid Document (Rs. 10000) and Bid Security (as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet) shall be deposited **online** in form as mentioned in Bid Data Sheet failing which the bid will be treated non responsive and action shall be taken as per Sec. 2 of ITB clause 12.2 (d).
3. In case, it is found, even after the award of work that the bidder has submitted/ uploaded any false/erroneous/fraudulent statement/document, he/she is liable for blacklisting and forfeiture of Bid Security.
4. Bidders must submit GST registration certificate without which bid is liable to be rejected.
5. Bidders whose names appear in the Debar/blacklist of RWD, any department of GoJ/GoI (including JSRRDA) shall not be allowed to participate in the above bids.
6. Bids submitted by bidders, who have long pending ATR(s) / made inordinate delay in execution of earlier allotted construction/ maintenance works of PMGSY, may be rejected summarily.
7. In case of any discrepancy/dispute about units in BOQ, units as mentioned in Current SOR on which BOQ has been prepared shall prevail.
8. Participating bidders are free to submit grievances, if any, against the decision of technical evaluation within five working days from the date of uploading of decision of technical evaluation only through email at **jh-ce@pmgsy.nic.in** Grievance submitted after stipulated period shall not be considered.
9. Bidders must have valid registration with Employee Provident Fund organization under EPF and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952 failing which the bid shall be rejected.
10. Bidders must not quote rate for routine maintenance. The amount for routine maintenance as indicated in the Bill of Quantities must be acceptable to bidders.
11. For unbalanced bids, extra security will be required to be deposited by the bidder at the time of Agreement.
12. The undersigned reserves the right to cancel the tender at any stage without giving prior notice/reason.

All other details can be seen in the bidding document which is available in website **pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in** as per schedule mentioned above.

PR.NO.312381 Rural Work Department(23-24):D **Chief Engineer, JSRRDA, Ranchi**

FAVOURITE FOR THE JOB

Ponting backs Bancroft to take the opener spot after Warner retires

REUTERS

Former Australian skipper Ricky Ponting feels that batter Cameron Bancroft is leading the race to succeed David Warner and Usman Khawaja at the top of Australia's Test batting. Earlier this year, Warner announced that he plans to retire after the SCG Test against Pakistan next year.

PULLING OUT ALL STOPS

England captain Stokes undergoes surgery on left knee

REUTERS

England captain Ben Stokes has undergone a successful surgery on his left knee in a bid to stay fit for the Test series in India, beginning January next year. Stokes was unable to bowl in the final three Ashes Tests against Australia this year and only featured as a batter at the World Cup, with his body unable to cope with the rigours of bowling.

IN HIS BLOOD

Picked it up naturally: Ravindra on starting his cricketing journey

K.R. DEEPAK

New Zealand's rising all-rounder Rachin Ravindra said he picked up cricket naturally because of his father's love for it. He recalled playing with his parents using a plastic ball. "Dad played club cricket, watched a lot of cricket, played it on PlayStation as well. Mum and Dad would always throw me plastic balls. I always wanted to bat or bowl," he said.

GREAT FEELING

Uganda qualifies for T20 World Cup, Zimbabwe misses out

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

With five wins from six games, Uganda ensured a top-two finish in the ICC men's T20 World Cup Africa Region Qualifier in Windhoek (Namibia) and booked a ticket for the event in West Indies and USA. The 'Cricket Cranes' join Namibia at the World Cup while Zimbabwe, which lost to Namibia and Uganda, has missed out.

India has another shot at series win even as Australia looks to stay alive

The home team has the edge as several regulars for the visiting side have flown back; a run-fest is on the cards, and dew could to be a key factor

AUSTRALIA IN INDIA

V.S. Aravind
RAIPUR

Having missed an opportunity to seal the series in Guwahati, Team India will have another shot to win the five-match contest when it takes on Australia in the penultimate T20I at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium here on Friday.

The fourth T20I will mark the return of designated vice-captain Shreyas Iyer who will be back in action after being rested for the initial three T20Is following India's splendid campaign in the recently concluded 2023 World Cup.

India was poised to seal the deal in Guwahati after having won the opener in Visakhapatnam and the second game in Thiruvananthapuram. However, despite posting a mammoth 222 in the third T20I, the Indian bowling attack failed to defend the total as Australia managed to pull one back.

India starts favourite

The likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, and the skipper Suryakumar Yadav have been among the runs, with India posting 200-plus totals in all three games.

Jaiswal, in particular, has been successful in capitalising during the Power-Play and setting the tone by providing blazing starts. Gaikwad is fresh from a century, while Surya has found his mojo back in the shortest format after struggling to make an impact in the World Cup.

Bowlers need to step up

While the batters have been able to pile runs and execute clinical run chases, the bowling has been a major concern for India, starting with the fast bowling duo of Arshdeep Singh and Prasidh Krishna. The Karnataka medium-pacer is likely to make way for Deepak Chahar, who has been among the runs and wickets in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy.

The availability of Mukesh Kumar will strengthen the bowling attack, where the pace department has struggled with line and length. Ravi Bishnoi has been the pick of the spinners, having claimed six wickets, including a three-wicket haul. Axar Patel too has made an impact, and it remains to be seen if Washington Sundar gets a look in.

Following the World Cup triumph, Steve Smith, Adam Zampa, Glenn Maxwell, Sean Abbott, Josh Inglis and Marcus Stoinis won't be available for the final two T20s and Travis Head will be the only player from the victorious team to play.

Fine-tuning: Shreyas has a go in the nets while Suryakumar waits for his turn. R.V. MOORTHY

Australia has ringed in changes by calling in wicketkeeper-batter Josh Philippe and Ben McDermott. Off-spinner Chris Green is likely to make his debut with 22-year-old Tanveer Sangha partnering Green with his leg-spin. Jason Behrendorff has been the pick of the Australian bowlers, as Phillipe, McDermott and Tim David are automatic choices, with Matthew Wade leading the side.

A run-fest is on the cards, and dew is expected to be a key factor in deciding the winner on a winter evening.

The captain calling the toss right would prefer to chase, leaving the team batting first to deal with the challenges of defending a total with the wet ball.

The teams (from):

India: Suryakumar Yadav (Capt.), Shreyas Iyer (Vice-capt.), Arshdeep Singh, Avesh Khan, Deepak Chahar, Shivam Dube, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Mukesh Kumar, Axar Patel, Prasidh Krishna, Ravi Bishnoi, Jitesh Sharma and Rinku Singh

Australia: Matthew Wade (Capt.), Jason Behrendorff, Tim David, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Chris Green, Aaron Hardie, Travis Head, Ben McDermott, Josh Phillippe, Kane Richardson, Tanveer Sangha and Matthew Short.

On-field Umpires: Jayaraman Madanagopal and K.N. Ananthapadmanabhan; **TV Umpire:** Virender Sharma; **Fourth Umpire:** Rohan Pandit.

Match begins at 7 p.m.

Rohit, Suryakumar and Rahul named skippers for SA series

At the helm: Rahul, the ODI captain and Suryakumar, the T20I skipper. FILE PHOTO: SPORTZPICS/BCCI

Agence France-Presse
MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Thursday named three skippers for their eight-match multi-format tour of South Africa next month, with Rohit Sharma leading the Tests side and Suryakumar Yadav and K.L. Rahul helming the T20I and ODI sides respectively.

The tour, which opens on December 10 with a T20I in Durban and is set to run until January 7, includes three T20Is, three ODIs and two Tests, BCCI said in a press release.

The board said Rohit and Virat Kohli had asked for a break from the white-ball leg of the tour. Mohd. Shami is undergoing medical treatment and his availability was subject to fitness.

The squads: Tests: Rohit Sharma (capt.), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, K.L. Rahul, R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Mohd. Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, and Prasidh Krishna.
T20Is: Suryakumar Yadav (capt.), Jaiswal, Gill, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Shreyas, Ishan, Jitesh Sharma, Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Siraj, Mukesh, and Deepak Chahar.
ODIs: Rahul (capt.), Ruturaj, Sai Sudharsan, Tilak, Rajat Patidar, Rinku, Shreyas, Sanju Samson, Axar Patel, Washington, Kuldeep, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mukesh, Avesh Khan, Arshdeep, and Deepak Chahar.
The schedule: 1st T20I: Dec. 10, Durban; **2nd T20I:** Dec. 12, Gqeberha; **3rd T20I:** Dec. 14, Johannesburg.
1st ODI: Dec. 17, Johannesburg; **2nd ODI:** Dec. 19, Gqeberha; **3rd ODI:** Dec. 21, Paarl.
1st Test: Dec. 26 to 30, Centurion; **2nd Test:** Jan. 3 to 7, 2024, Cape Town.

BFC and Punjab FC play out an absorbing draw

ISL-10

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

For the second day running, the Indian Super League witnessed a high-scoring game as Bengaluru FC and Punjab FC played out an entertaining 3-3 draw at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium here on Thursday.

Punjab shaded the first half and BFC the second, and the stalemate meant that Simon Grayson's men remained eighth in the table (seven points) and the visitors rose up by one spot to 11th (four).

A frenetic first period saw as many as five goals. Nikhil Prabhu opened for Punjab in the 19th minute, tapping in a cross from the right. But BFC hit back immediately with a beautifully worked move on the right flank involving Javi Hernandez and Sunil Chhetri. It finished with 20-year-old Harsh Patre scoring his maiden ISL goal.

On target: Main slots in BFC's second goal. K. MURALI KUMAR

Punjab, though, was unfazed and scored twice in a four-minute window. Dimitrios Chatziisaias sent a looping header in with his back to the goal and Luka Majcen unleashed a fierce shot from distance after a smart backheel layoff by Juan Mera.

Moments before the break, BFC pulled one back when a teasing cross from Naorem Roshan from the left flank caused a mix-up between Chatziisaias and goalie Ravi Kumar and Curtis Main bundled the stray ball in.

The strike kept BFC within touching distance, and when N. Sivasakthi, Suresh Wangjam and Slavko Damjanovic were introduced for the second period, the home side changed for the better. Hernandez's equaliser in the 67th minute was no surprise as he converted a Chhetri pass from an acute angle on the left.

BFC drove forward, and Chhetri and Main came close to winning it all. But some fine goalkeeping by Ravi Kumar ensured Punjab a point.

The result: Bengaluru FC 3 (Patre 21, Main 45+1, Hernandez 67) drew with Punjab FC 3 (Prabhu 19, Chatziisaias 26, Majcen 30).

Arsenal in rampant form; Man United's woes deepen

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Associated Press
GENEVA

Arsenal scored six to advance in the Champions League as a group winner on Wednesday while Manchester United stayed last in its group despite again scoring three times away from home.

Arsenal's 6-0 rout of Lens ensured second-place PSV Eindhoven also advanced from Group B to the round of 16 – PSV rallied in the second-half to win 3-2 at Sevilla. There are now 12 confirmed teams in the round of 16 draw on December 18 and United is in serious danger of missing out.

The three-time European champion led by two goals after 18 minutes at Galatasaray and 3-2 early in the second half but was pegged back again in a wild 3-3 draw. United now needs to beat Bayern at Old Trafford in two weeks' time.

The results: Group A: Galatasaray 3 (Ziyech 29, 62, Akturkoglu 71) drew with Manchester United 3 (Garnacho 11, Fernandes 18, McTominay 55); Bayern Munich 0 drew with FC Copenhagen 0.

Havertz gives Arsenal's goal-glut a head start. REUTERS

Group B: Sevilla 2 (Ramos 24, En-Nesyri 47) lost to PSV Eindhoven 3 (Saibari 68, Gudelj 81-og, Pepi 90+2); Arsenal 6 (Havertz 13, Jesus 21, Saka 23, Martinelli 27, Odegaard 45+1, Jorginho 86-pen) bt Lens 0.
Group C: Real Madrid 4 (Rodrygo 11, Bellingham 22, Paz 84, Joselu 90+4) bt Napoli 2 (Simeone 9, Zambo Anguissa 47); Sporting Braga 1 (Djalo 51) drew with Union Berlin 1 (Gosens 42).
Group D: Benfica 3 (Joao Mario 5, 13, 34) drew with Inter Milan 3 (Arnautovic 51, Frattesi 58, Sanchez 72-pen); Real Sociedad 0 drew with Salzburg 0.

Scheffler thrilled at Woods being the players' voice

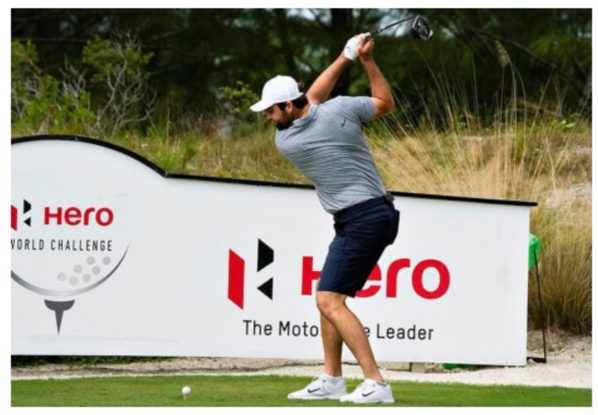
Ashwin Achal
NASSAU

World number one Scottie Scheffler is "extremely grateful" that Tiger Woods has taken an active role in shaping the future of professional golf. Having recently joined the PGA Tour's policy board, Woods will be voice of the players as the Tour aims to seal a deal with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund.

"Tiger is not someone who goes at 50%. As a player, I'm extremely grateful for what he's doing. He has our best interests in mind, and he's not going to compromise. His voice definitely holds a lot of weight," Scheffler said in a press conference here.

Scheffler, the 2022 Master champion, is excited to see Woods back on the course. Woods makes his comeback at the Hero World Challenge here, after another long injury layoff.

"I love seeing him hit balls and hearing that sound. He's still got the same sound, which is amazing. I feel rusty coming off two months without a tournament. He goes almost a year at a time, and he comes back and plays good golf. For him to be able to do it like this for so many years is pretty miraculous," Scheffler said.



Be on top: Scheffler will look to go one better after finishing runner-up in the past two editions. AP

"He's just a freak athlete. I never got to see (Jack) Nicklaus up close, but in my head Tiger is the best to ever play the game. The way he wins at such a high clip for so many years is pretty insane," the 27-year-old added.

Scheffler has not competed since the Ryder Cup a couple of months ago. It was an event to forget for the American, who suffered a record 9&7 loss (alongside playing partner Brooks Koepka) to Viktor Hovland and Ludvig Aberg.

Scheffler, who finished second at this tournament in the last two editions, has returned refreshed from a break.

"It will be good to see where my game is at. I want to get things running again – get my feet wet on the course and play some tournament golf," Scheffler said.

(The writer is in Nassau on invitation from Hero MotoCorp)

INBRIEF

Ranveer wins snooker title, makes it a memorable double

Chandigarh's Ranveer Duggal added the junior boys' snooker title to the junior billiards crown he won last week in the 90th National billiards & snooker championships in Chennai on Thursday. Duggal defeated Gujarat's Mayur Garg 4-1 in the snooker final to cap off a memorable double. TNBSA president B.G. Muralidharan gave away the trophy.

The results (junior boys): Snooker: Final: Ranveer Duggal (Chg) bt Mayur Garg (Guj) 58-55, 2-61, 63-3, 74-22, 61-27). **Third place:** Mahendra Chauhan (MP) bt Kamran Majid (J&K) 3-1 (71-8, 31-70, 64-17, 77-64).

India thrashes Canada in women's jr. hockey World Cup

India made a resounding start to its FIH women's junior hockey World Cup campaign by securing a commanding 12-0 victory over Canada in Santiago on Wednesday. Annu (fourth, sixth, 39th), Dipi Monika Toppo (21st), Mumtaz Khan (26th, 41st, 54th, 60th), Deepika Soreng (34th, 50th, 54th), and Neelam (45th minute) were the scorers. India will meet Germany on Friday.

Amit weathers Ankit's challenge for 51kg final spot

World championships silver medallist Amit Panghal overcame a strong challenge from Ankit in the semifinals to book a slot in the 51kg summit clash in the National boxing championships in Shillong on Thursday. Amit managed a 3-2 card in his favour following which the bout was reviewed. The ace boxer was adjudged the winner with a 5-2 verdict after getting the evaluator and observer's votes.

The results (semifinals): 48kg: Barun Singh (SSCB) bt Ashish (Har) 5-0, Yaiphaba Soibam (Man) bt Honey Ohlyan (Del) 5-0; **51kg:** Amit Panghal (SSCB) bt Ankit (RSPB) 5-2, Anshul Punia (Chd) bt Zorammuana (Miz) 5-0; **54kg:** Lalit (AIP) t Sanket Goud (Mah) 5-0, Pawan (SSCB) bt Ruchir Srivas (MP) 5-0; **57kg:** Sachin Siwach Jr (SSCB) bt Himanshu Srivas (MP) 5-0, Sachin Siwach (RSPB) bt Ankit (Chd) 4-1; **60kg:** Akash Kumar (SSCB) w/o Sourav (HP), Varinder Singh (RSPB) bt Harsh (AIP) KO-R1; **63.5kg:** Shiva Thapa (Asm) bt Harivansh Tawari (Mah) 5-0, Vanshaj (SSCB) bt Amit (RSPB) 3-0. **67kg:** Abhishek Yadav (RSPB) bt Parlad Singh (Pun) 4-1, Rajat (SSCB) bt Neeraj Pujari (Utk) 5-0; **71kg;** Abhinab Saikia (Asm) bt Rahul (Utk) 4-3, Akash Sangwan (SSCB) bt Jashanpreet Singh (Pun) 5-0; **75kg:** Ishmeet Singh (RSPB) bt Rounak Mishra (Bih) 5-0, Deepak (SSCB) bt Ayaan Parihar (HP) 5-0; **80kg:** Lakshya Chahar (SSCB) bt Abhimanyu Loura (Har) 3-0, Harsh Choudhary (Raj) bt Harsh Lakra (Del) 4-1. **86kg:** Jugnoo (SSCB) bt Rohit Bawa (Chd) RSC-R3, Vishal (Har) bt Pranav H. (Ker) RSC-R1; **92kg:** Naveen Kumar (Har) bt Kanwarpreet Singh (Pun) 5-0, Sanjeet (SSCB) bt Vicky (AIP) 5-0; **+92kg:** Jaipal Singh (Pun) bt Brijesh Yadav (AIP) 5-0, Sagar Ahlawat (RSPB) bt Vishal Kumar (Del) 5-0.

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs New Zealand: 1st Test, day 4, FanCode, 9 a.m.

India-A Women vs England-A Women: 2nd T20, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 p.m.

Hockey: Women's Junior WC, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 3 & 5 p.m.

India vs Australia: 4th T20I, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 8 p.m.

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.15 a.m. (Saturday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

'It is a great feeling and a dream come true'

Sai Sudharsan, selected for the ODI team to tour South Africa, says this season's IPL and TNPL has helped him progress

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

B. Sai Sudharsan, one of the most exciting talents to come through from Tamil Nadu in recent times, got his big break on Thursday after being selected as part of the Indian ODI team for the tour to South Africa later this month.

The 22-year-old left-handed opening batter has had a meteoric rise in the last two years. Sai Sudharsan became a household name earlier this year with impressive performances for Gujarat Titans in the IPL, the highlight of which was the 94 he made in the final against Chennai Super Kings.

Currently, he is with the TN squad in Mumbai for the Vijay Hazare Trophy and has started the tournament well, scoring a match-winning 125 in the first game against Goa.

"It is a great feeling, and I am a bit lost for words. It is a dream come true for me, but at the same time, this is just the beginning, and there are many areas where I need to improve," said Sai Sudharsan to *The Hindu* on Thursday.

Perseverance pays: Sai Sudharshan's consistent exploits have earned him the national call-up. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After missing out on the final year in under-19 cricket because of the pandemic in 2020, he has more than made up for it in the last two years.

"I think the TNPL in 2021 and this year's IPL have been some of the key moments in my career so far and helped me progress," he remarked on his journey in the last few years.

After the IPL this year, he has been part of the Duleep Trophy, Deodhar Trophy, Irani Cup and the India-A squad for the ACC Emerging Cup in Sri Lanka, where he scored an unbeaten century against Pakistan-A. In September, he debuted in the English county circuit and played two games for Surrey. He top-scored in both innings in his second game.

"But my first goal is to just focus on my match tomorrow (Friday) against Punjab and help the team qualify for the knockouts," said Sai Sudharsan before signing off.

Shanto hits unbeaten ton as Bangladesh takes control

NZ IN BANGLADESH

Agence France-Presse
SYLHET

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto hit his third Test century in four innings to put Bangladesh on course for a strong total in the second innings of the first Test against New Zealand in Sylhet on Thursday.

The host reached 212 for three at stumps on the third day, leading New Zealand by 205 runs, with Najmul unbeaten on 104.

Mushfiqur Rahim made an unbeaten 43 and put on 96 runs in the unbroken fourth-wicket stand with Najmul. Najmul also shared 90 runs with Mominul Haque for the third wicket.

The left-hander has now become the first Bangladeshi cricketer to score a hundred on his debut as Test captain.

Earlier, New Zealand was dismissed for 317.

The scores:
Bangladesh 310 & 212/3 in 68 overs (Najmul Hossain batting 104, Mushfiqur Rahim batting 43, Mominul Haque 40) vs New Zealand 317 in 101.5 overs.

Morillo ousts Nagal in Challenger in Spain

Sports Bureau

Second seed Sumit Nagal was beaten 3-6, 6-4, 7-5 by qualifier Imanol Lopez Morillo in the pre-quarterfinals of the €73,000 Challenger tennis tournament in Maspalomas, Spain, on Thursday.

The results: €118,000 Challenger, Maia, Portugal: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Fernando Romboli (Bra) & Szymon Walkow (Pol) bt Anirudh Chandrasekar & Ivan Liutarevich 3-6, 6-3, [10-3].

$130,000 Challenger, Yokkaichi, Japan: Doubles (quarterfinals): Niki Poonacha & Divij Sharan bt James Trotter & Takeru Yuzuki (Jpn) 7-6(6), 3-6, [10-8]; Rithvik Bollipalli & Arjun Kadhe bt Yu Hsiou Hsu (Tpe) & Yuta Shimizu (Jpn) 6-4, 6-3; **Pre-quarterfinals:** Niki & Divij bt Toshihide Matsui & Kaito Uesugi (Jpn) 6-0, 2-6, [10-8]; Rithvik & Arjun bt Seiya Mizuno & Shion Motoyama (Jpn) 6-4, 6-2.

€73,000 Challenger, Maspalomas, Spain: Singles (pre-quarterfinals): Imanol Lopez Morillo (Esp) bt Sumit Nagal 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prashanth bt Alexandru Jecan & Dan Alexandru Tomescu (Rou) 7-6(7), 6-3.

$15,000 ITF women, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: Singles (first round): Cara Maria Mester (Rou) bt Teja Tirunelveli 6-3, 7-6(5).

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Kim Yujin (Kor) & Fang An Lin (Tpe) bt Astrid Cirotte (Fra) & Teja Tirunelveli 5-7, 6-1, [10-8].

$15,000 ITF women, Heraklion, Greece: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Rianna Coreisa & Lavinia Tanasie (Rou) bt Harsshali Mandavkar & Angelica Martinez (Col) 6-0, 6-1.

$15,000 ITF women, Valencia, Spain: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Isabella Aguirre (USA) & Marcelina Podlinska (Pol) bt Nessa Pratt (Aus) & Bela Tamhankar 6-0, 6-0.

VIJAY HAZARE FIXTURES

Group A (Bengaluru): Mumbai vs. Saurashtra; Kerala vs. Sikkim; Railways vs. Tripura; Odisha vs. Pondicherry.

Group B (Jaipur): Hyderabad vs. Maharashtra; Jharkhand vs. Manipur; Chhattisgarh vs. Vidarbha; Meghalaya vs. Services.

Group C (Ahmedabad): Chandigarh vs. Karnataka; J&K vs. Mizoram; Delhi vs. Haryana; Bihar vs. Uttarakhand.

Group D (Chandigarh): Assam vs. Uttar Pradesh; Andhra vs. Gujarat; Arunachal vs. Himachal.

Group E (Mumbai): Punjab vs. Tamil Nadu; Baroda vs. Madhya Pradesh; Goa vs. Nagaland.

24-member team for Valencia tournament

HOCKEY

ANI
NEW DELHI

Hockey India (HI) on Thursday announced a 24-member Indian men's team for the upcoming 5 Nations Tournament Valencia 2023, scheduled from December 15 to 22.

India will play against hosts Spain, Germany, France and Belgium in the tournament, which will serve as the preparatory event ahead of the 2023-24 FIH Hockey Pro League.

The team has a mix of youth and experienced and will be led by ace drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh. Sumit and Amit Rohidas have been named the vice-captains.

Good mix

"We are going with a well-balanced side with a good mix of youth and experience. The tournament provides us with a great platform to try out different things and adjust ourselves accordingly. It also provides the younger players with a great opportunity to showcase their talent and experience the pressure of facing the top teams in the world," said chief coach Craig Fulton.

Harmanpreet... at the helm. R. RAGU

The team:
Goalkeepers: P.R. Sreejesh, Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Suraj Karkera.
Defenders: Jarmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh (capt.), Varun Kumar, Sumit, Sanjay, Nilam Sanjeep Xess.
Midfielders: Yashdeep Siwach, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilakanta Sharma, Rajkumar Pal, Shamsher Singh, Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem.
Forwards: Mandeep Singh, Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, S. Karthi, Dilpreet Singh, Akashdeep Singh.

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Kerala pips Karnataka

BENGALURU: R. Abhirami scored a 75th-minute winner as Kerala edged out Karnataka 3-2 in a Group-C match of the Senior Women's National Football Championship in Bengaluru on Thursday.

The results: Kerala 3 (M.P. Greshma 7, K. Manasa 40, R. Abhirami 75) bt Karnataka 2 (Rosy Thanga 42, 67); Chandigarh 2 (Balvinder Kaur 28) bt Tripura 0; Sikkim 3 (Nimita Gurung 45+2, Simran Gurung 60, Prekila Tamang 80) bt Assam 0.

Yaeesh, Atharv hog the limelight

Yaeesh Rahman's all-round effort (40 & 6/16) helped Blue Diamond Cricketers thrash Canarese CC by 215 runs in the KSCA (Group I) under-14 inter-club tournament, In another match, Atharv S. Deshpande's six-wicket haul (6/8) was instrumental in Mount Joy CC's five-wicket win over Lions CC.

The scores:
Blue Diamond Cricketers 288/3 in 50 overs (M.R. Lishan 75, Raunak Kumar Singh 30, S.S. Abhinav 103 n.o., Yaeesh Rahaman 40) bt Canarese 73 in 30.4 overs (A.S. Kiruthik Pranav 28, Yaeesh Rahaman 6/16).
Lions 73 in 29.4 overs (Mahith Bandi 37, Atharv S. Deshpande 6/8, Kishore Manjunatha 3/26) lost to Mount Joy 74/5 in 24.3 overs.
Eminent Cricketers 42 in 30.2 overs (Raghav Sanjay Vadher 3/4) lost to Palace Orchard 44/0 in 8.4 overs (H.S. Amogh Athreyasa 33 n.o.).
Coles 204 in 49.3 overs (Jnyan C. Karkera 25, Mohnish Shankar Sriramaneni 32, Ahan Udpi 66 n.o., Ekansh Roul 4/30) lost to Bangalore SC 205/2 in 37.4 overs (B. Pavandeep 103 n.o., M. Tanshh Krishna 52).
Young Challenging Cricketers 222 in 49.5 overs (Arya Senthil Kumar 26, Vishesh M. Gowda 74, Manjunath Bhirakatti 33, Nischith Prasad 3/30) lost to Minerva 223/6 in 37.5 overs (G.M. Praneel 38, Siddharth Rajesh Nair 57, Aagneya P.M. Karanth 27, Chirayu S. Neelagiri 36 n.o.).
Friends XI, Doddaballapura 196/6 in 50 overs (Prabhav Pydah 71, Aarav Kapoor 50) lost to Bharath 197/2 in 24.5 overs (Arya Venkat 74 n.o., Aadrith 72 n.o.).
The Bangalore Cricketers 313/6 in 50 overs (V.K. Babu 39, A. Rishik 66, Abhinav Kulkarni 152 n.o.) bt Merchants (2) 127 in 37.1 overs (V. Vedanth Kumar 48, S. Nischal 27, Vedanth B. Hebbar 4/24).
National United 98 in 30 overs (Dhruvesh 3/24, Krish Rao 3/19) lost to Sir Syed Cricketers 102/1 in 17.4 overs (Mansoor Javed Eroor 54 n.o., Siddhant Srikant 36).
Young Lions Club 362/6 in 50 overs (M. Rohith 109, Brahmanya Theertha R. Kuber 42, R. Shivaraj 121, A. Suraj 40 n.o.) bt Merchants (1) 227 in 41.5 overs (O.S.V. Sathyajit 37, Rahuldev Singh 42, A. Suraj 3/20).
RV Engineering College 201/9 in 50 overs (Sachith Shetty 26, Skandha D. Shetty 42, Rushil Halkerwal 30) bt Chintamani SA 180 in 47.3 overs (Mahill Mehta 48).
Jayanagar United Cricketers 77 in 23.5 overs (S. Rahul Modaliyar 25, Sourov M. Gowda 3/22, Prayag Bijesh 5/11) lost to Vijaya 81/3 in 17.1 overs (Panshul Sharma 28).
BUCC (1) 309/6 in 50 overs (Rohit Nair 38, Yash Rajanna 29, Aditya Singh 105, Ryan Aaron Minj 63 n.o., J. Ranjan 3/53) bt Unique 57 in 22.4 overs (V. Roshan James 4/22, Vedant Venkat Athreya 3/13).
Coles 82 in 39.4 overs (Gollapalli Chetan Vishnu 3/16) lost to Vultures 86/3 in 18.4 overs (Milind Akash 25 n.o., Aloka Padasalagi 27).
Bangalore SC 216/6 in 50 overs (M. Tanshh Krishna 65, Arush Jain 56, Vikram 4/55) bt Visweswarapuram (1) 199/9 in 50 overs (Akshaj Kathuria 31, Rithvik Kulasekar 64).
Swastic Union (2) 413/6 in 50 overs (Arsh 117, Harish Bam 63, J. Sukruth 164 n.o., R. Nithin 38, Aadrith 3/66) bt Bharath 235 in 48 overs (Sujan Gunapal 101 n.o.).
Bowlers 92 in 32.2 overs lost to Swastic Union (1) 93/1 in 12.4 overs (Samarth Suresh 27 n.o., A. Mohmmed Raheel 30 n.o.).
Sangam CA 264/7 in 50 overs (Aalapkrishna Manikandan 157 n.o., Soumith Kongara 32, Rushil Halkerwal 3/44) bt RV Engineering College 220 in 49.3 overs (P. Lithik Reddy 107, Punith Lakshman Kumar 3/41, Aryaman Srivastava 3/53).
Jolly Cricketers 150 in 35.3 overs (Srijesh Parthiban 38, Kevin Hiteshkumar Dubal 3/35) bt Merchants (2) 125 in 31.4 overs (Sai Koushik Reddy 31, Samrudh Girish 4/40).
Whirlwind Cricketers 52 in 23.1 overs (Manish V. Patil 5/9) lost to Vijaya 53/0 in 8.1 overs (Anjaney Gupta 25 n.o.).

Easy for RBI

Reserve Bank of India beat Major Dhyanchand HC, Dharwad, 3-0 in the KSHA-BHA B-division hockey league championship on Thursday. Also on the day, Adhiyamaan College of Engineering drew 1-1 with Blue & White HC.

Aryan battles past Sidharth

KALABURAGI: Qualifier Aryan Shah, 18, battled past Sidharth Rawat 4-6, 7-6(4), 7-6(3) to enter the singles quarterfinals of the Ultratech Cement ITF Kalaburagi Open at the Chandrashekar Patil Stadium on Thursday.

Other results (singles, round-of-16): David Pichler (Aut) bt Harrison Adams (USA) 7-6(6), 6-3; Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Kabir Hans 7-5, 3-6, 6-2; Manish Sureshkumar bt Bharath Nishok Kumaran 6-1, 6-0; Seita Watanabe (Jpn) bt Rishi Reddy 6-2, 6-3; Rishab Agarwal bt Manish Ganesh 6-1, 7-6(1); Matsuda Ryuki (Jpn) bt Raghav Jaisinghani 6-2, 6-0; Ryotaro Taguchi (Jpn) bt Karan Singh 7-5, 6-1.

Angadvir, Ganemat win mixed skeet gold in National shooting

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Angadvir Singh Bajwa and Ganemat Sekhon won the mixed skeet gold for Punjab in the 66th National shooting championship here on Thursday.

The duo beat Rajasthan's Darshna Rathore and Anantjeet Singh Naruka 47-41, after having topped qualification with 140.

On the podium: Anjum, champion Sift Kaur, and Ashi, the medallists in the rifle 3-position event. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results:
Mixed skeet: 1. Punjab (Angadvir Singh Bajwa, Ganemat Sekhon) 47 (140); 2. Rajasthan (Darshna Rathore, Anantjeet Singh Naruka) 41 (138); 3. Uttar Pradesh (Mairaj Khan, Areeba Khan) 44 (132); 4. Haryana (Sanjana Sood, Ishaan Singh) 38 (137).
Juniors: 1. Telangana (Munek Batula, Zahra Deesawala) 41 (145); 2. Rajasthan (Yashasvi Rathore, Yaduraj Singh) 38 (132); 3. Madhya Pradesh (Rituraj Bundela, Shivani Raikwar) 36 (125); 4. Punjab (Bhavtegh Gill, Parmeet Shergill) 35 (115).
Skeet: Junior men: 1. Abhay Singh Sekhon 55 (121); 2. Gurfateh Singh Sandhu 52 (118); 3. Bhavtegh Singh Gill 43 (119).
Junior women: 1. Zahra Deesawala 54 (119); 2. Venkat Lakshmi Lakku 48 (110); 3. Yashasvi Rathore 37 (112).
50m rifle 3-position: Women: 1. Sift Kaur Samra 465.7 (593); 2. Anjum Moudgil 463.8 (587); 3. Ashi Chouksey 452.0 (590).
Junior women: 1. Nischal 465.9 (595); 2. Ashi Chouksey 463.2 (590); 3. Heena Gohei 447.4 (586).

Final round to have an expanded knockout stage

SANTOSH TROPHY

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A total of 12 teams have been divided into two groups in the final round of the Santosh Trophy to be held in February-March next year, with the top four sides from each pool progressing into the quarterfinals.

For the first time since its inception in 1941, the Santosh Trophy will be held in Arunachal Pradesh and, as per the new format, the tournament will see an expanded knockout stage.

The participating teams include six group-stage winners – Goa, Delhi, Manipur, Assam, Services and Maharashtra, three best second-placed teams – Kerala, Mizoram and Railways, and three automatic qualifiers – host Arunachal Pradesh, last season's champion Karnataka and finalist Meghalaya.

The dates have tentatively been fixed from February 21 to March 9.

The final round draw:
Group A: Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Goa, Assam, Services, Kerala. **Group B:** Karnataka, Maharashtra, Delhi, Manipur, Mizoram, Railways.

It's Knotty Charmer versus Inyouwebelieve in Kempegowda Cup

BENGALURU: Knotty Charmer and Inyouwebelieve may fight out the finish of the Kempegowda Cup (1,400m), the main event of the races to be held here on Friday (Dec. 1). False rails (width about 4m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.

1 BECKET PLATE (1,100m), maiden 2-y-o only, (Terms), 1-30 p.m.: 1. Makoto (1) Antony 56, 2. Storm Shadow (3) B. Harish 56, 3. Zarqawi (5) Akshay K 56, 4. Anzac Parade (6) Srinath 54.5, 5. Del Aviz (4) Trevor 54.5, 6. Magical Bay (2) G. Vivek 54.5 and 7. Scarlette Lady (7) S. Shareef 54.5.

1. DEL AVIZ, 2. ZARQAWI, 3. MAGICAL BAY

2 MUTHYALAMADUVU PLATE (DIV. II), (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 2-05: 1. Never Give In (1) S. John 60, 2. Bleue Dali (4) Arshad 59.5, 3. Cristaldo (8) Chethan K 59, 4. Quick Witted (2) Jagadeesh 59, 5. Honey Cake (5) A. Ramu 58.5, 6. Sling Shot (6) Vinod Shinde 58.5, 7. Smile Of Beauty (7) Tousif 58.5, 8. Loving Pearl (3) R. Pradeep 57.5, 9. Samachar (11) Vivek 57.5, 10. Way Of Life (9) R. Ravi 56 and 11. Sacred Creator (10) Angad 55.

1. NEVER GIVE IN, 2. BLEUE DALI, 3. CRISTALDO

3 MAHANADI PLATE (1,600m), rated 20 to 45, 2-40: 1. Granpar (4) Neeraj 60.5, 2. Momentous (8) Akshay K 59.5, 3. Sassy (2) Trevor 57, 4. Super Sapphire (3) Salman Khan 56.5, 5. Invincible (7) S. Saqlain 55.5, 6. Palomino (5) R. Girish 55, 7. Sunlit Path (1) L.A. Rozario 55, 8. Cat Whiskers (6) Darshan 54 and 9. Sincerity (9) Antony 53.5.

1. SASSY, 2. GRANPAR, 3. INVINCIBLE

4 GLASS HOUSE TROPHY (1,200m), rated 40 to 65, 5-y-o & over, 3-15: 1. Knight In Hooves (4) Suraj 61.5, 2. Air Display (7) Vivek 60, 3. Devils Magic (1) Srinath 59, 4. Millbrook (5) Antony 58.5, 5. Classic Charm (10) Darshan 57.5, 6. Osiris (2) A. Ramu 55.5, 7. Anakin (3) G. Vivek 55, 8. Lauterbrunnen (6) Angad 54, 9. Able One (8) Arshad 53 and 10. Solo Prince (9) L.A. Rozario 53.

1. KNIGHT IN HOOVES, 2. DEVILS MAGIC, 3. LAUTERBRUNNEN

5 KEMPEGOWDA CUP (1,400m), rated 60 to 85, 3-50: 1. Peyo (1) Vinod Shinde 60, 2. Kalamitsi (2) Srinath 58, 3. Knotty Charmer (5) Antony 58, 4. English Bay (3) Tousif 57, 5. Disruptor (7) A. Ramu 55, 6. Inyouwebelieve (6) Trevor 54.5 and 7. Nikolina (4) G. Vivek 51.5.

1. KNOTTY CHARMER, 2. INYOUWEBELIEVE, 3. NIKOLINA

6 KAVERI PLATE (1,600m), rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over, 4-25: 1. Klimt (1) L.A. Rozario 62, 2. Armory (6) Angad 60, 3. Castaneda (7) S. John 60, 4. Southern Dynasty (4) Darshan 59, 5. Breeze Bluster (5) Vinod Shinde 55.5, 6. Chinky Pinky (9) R. Pradeep 54, 7. Je Ne Sais Quoi (3) Akshay K 53, 8. Ultimate Ruler (2) Arshad 52 and 9. My Visionary (8) S. Shareef 51.

1. CASTANEDA,2. BREEZE BLUSTER, 3. JE NE SAIS QUOI

7 MUTHYALAMADUVU PLATE (DIV. I), (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 5-00: 1. Star Admiral (9) Darshan 62, 2. Prophecy (4) Trevor 61.5, 3. Art Gallery (8) Srinath 60, 4. Divo (10) S. Saqlain 60, 5. Dynamic Force (7) Akshay K 58.5, 6. Ombudsman (3) Vivek 58.5, 7. Crosswater (6) Antony 56, 8. Contractor (2) R. Pradeep 55, 9. Blues Ballad (1) A. Ramu 54, 10. Golden Starlet (12) M. Rajesh K 53.5, 11. My Solitaire (5) S. Shareef 53 and 12. Diamond Hooves (11) L.A. Rozario 52.5.

1. PROPHECY, 2. CROSSWATER, 3. ART GALLERY

Day's best: **PROPHECY**
Double: **SASSY – CASTANEDA**
Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.